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Human rights agencies worried over Chiapas

Alan Doerksen

CHIAPAS, Mexico — Since 1994, a low-intensity war has been raging in the Mexican state of Chiapas, which has cost many evangelical Christians their homes or lives. Human rights agencies are concerned and want the Canadian government to speak up strongly.

Though Foreign Affairs Minister Lloyd Axworthy has expressed his concern over the situation, two human rights groups, Amnesty International and the Inter-Church Council of Human Rights in Latin America (ICCHRLA), are not impressed with his department's statements and actions.

In mid-April, Axworthy announced plans to send interna-

tional human rights observers into Chiapas to assess the situation.

But recently, the Mexican government has ejected many human rights workers from Chiapas. Just a few days before Axworthy's announcement, the Mexican government deported two Canadian human rights workers from the Montreal-based agency Salut Le Monde (Hello, World) who had gone to Chiapas on tourist visas. The reason given was that the women had ostensibly gone as tourists but had participated in political activities barred to foreigners by law, reports the *Toronto Star*.

"The Mexican government has been very strict about

foreigners' involvement," says Amnesty International Canada spokesperson John Tackaberry. Instead of focusing on whether or not people have the right visas, Mexico should be bringing human rights violators in Chiapas to justice, Tackaberry asserts.

Despite Axworthy's call for human rights observers to visit Chiapas, he supported the Mexican government's decision to remove the two Canadian women from Mexico. This disturbs Suzanne Rumsey, ICCHRLA's program co-ordinator for Central America and Mexico.

"The sense we were getting was a double message from Axworthy," she says. "We were See AGENCIES page 3..."



Canadian Catholic Bishops Francois Thibideau (l.) and Michel Ingham celebrate a requiem mass on Jan. 7, 1995, the first anniversary of the death of three native men in Chiapas, which took place during a 12-day war between the Mexican army and the Zapatistas.

Skepticism becoming minority says former atheist

Gordon Legge

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Policy adviser Patrick Glynn is an atheist-turned Christian who is in the vanguard of a small but growing group of intellectuals

and scientists endeavoring to reconcile science and religion.

"The day, I believe, is soon coming when skepticism, unbelief, is going to be the minority position, not just

among the populace at large, but even among intellectuals," says Glynn, author of a new book, *God: the Evidence — the Reconciliation of Faith and Reason in a Post-secular World* (Prima). "What happened to me — the rediscovery of the spiritual — is happening to others and is on the verge of happening to our culture as a whole."

Science and religion, faith and reason became estranged in the West after the onset of the 18th century Enlightenment. Now a spate of heady books gather up recent scientific insights and discoveries in physics, biology, medicine, cosmology, mathematics and the mind sciences, using them as evidence for a Creator, and to promote the idea that science and religion are cousins having much to gain from each other.

standing," John Polkinghorne, a Cambridge physicist and Anglican priest, says in his new book *Belief in God in an Age of Science* (Yale).

"They're definitely on the increase," says Phyllis Tickle, contributing editor on religion for *Publishers' Weekly* and author of *God-talk in America* (Crossroad), who devotes a portion of her book to the phenomenon.

"Publishers told me two years ago that this was becoming a major theme," she said in a recent telephone interview from Memphis. "I find it absolutely fascinating. This area excites me more in terms of its potential than any other area."

New journals are emerging and whole conferences are being held to tackle the subject, something unheard of 10 years ago. Last month at Toronto's York

University there was a conference on "Mathematics: A Bridge Between Science and Religion." In June, the University of California in Berkeley will host a conference on Physics and the Spiritual Quest.

Like morning coffee

Glynn does not believe that reason can bring a person to belief in God. Rather, he says, reason no longer stands in the way. "The past two decades of research have overturned nearly all the important assumptions and predictions of an earlier generation of modern secular and atheistic thinkers relating to the issue of God."

Today, Glynn says, "It is so much easier to be a believer. Being an atheist is a lot of work. Being a believer is joy and peace itself. You have a clearer

See SCIENCE page 2...



Lawyer Dean Overman says the information stored in bacteria (l.) is far more complex than the city of Manhattan (r.).

A major theme

"The new-style natural theology in no way seeks to be a rival to scientific explanation, but rather it aims to complement that explanation by setting it within a wider and more profound context of under-

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News

Science, math used to support existence of God

... continued from page 1

sense of where you are going."

Borrowing a phrase from another Harvard researcher, Dr. Herbert Benson, who studies the power of prayer, Glynn says people are wired for God. "I know that's true."

Karl Marx once said that religion is the opium of the masses. Glynn says religion's more like morning coffee. "It clears your head and makes you see what's going on in the world."

No standard?

Washington corporate lawyer Dean Overman shares that conviction.

Overman grew up in a conservative Lutheran family where they talked about physics around the dinner table. His relatives worked on the Manhattan Project, which developed the atomic bomb.

A top athlete and scholar

since his high school days, Overman, who was an advisor to U.S. Vice-Presidents Nelson Rockefeller and Walter Mondale, never planned to enter the debate about the origin of life.

"I am a lawyer concerned with logic and the validity of premises, inferences and conclusions as they relate to an examination of evidence," he says in the *Preface to a Case Against Accident and Self-Organization* (Rowman and Littlefield).

But he was irritated by an article in *Telicom*, the journal of the International Society of Philosophical Enquiry, an organization with about 750 high-IQ members in 40 countries. To his surprise the article said that a discredited scientific experiment "worked" and that individuals were free to select their own purposes and goals without regard to any standard.

Instead of writing a letter to the editor countering the thesis,

Overman wrote a book in which he draws on probability theory and particle physics to support belief in an intelligent Creator.

He calculates that the mathematical probability of life emerging by accidental processes in the time between the creation of the Earth and first emergence of life, about 130 million years, are nil. And he produces mind-numbing numbers to demonstrate the point.

"Mathematical calculations are overpoweringly against accidental processes using the first form of living matter," he says. A Mensa member, Overman quotes astronomer Sir Fred Hoyle, an atheist, who also agrees that life could not have arisen on earth by accident. Hoyle said the likelihood was about as great as a typhoon blowing through a junkyard and constructing a Boeing 747.

Hoyle, and others, believe life arose on another planet and was transported here. God is a better explanation, says Overman. Both explanations require a leap of faith, but Overman thinks his is a shorter jump. He compares

the information stored in the bacteria as being far more complex than the entire city of Manhattan. And the slightest variance would have doomed the whole project from the start.

Lame, blind science

The promotional material that accompanies John Polkinghorne's book quotes Albert Einstein, who said "Science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind." The world renowned theoretical physicist and theologian sides with Einstein, seeing science and theology as partners in the common quest for understanding.

Polkinghorne holds a special place in the discussion about the relationship between science and religion, having led the way with his prodigious writings.

He has impeccable credentials. After teaching physics at Cambridge in England for 25 years, he left to become an Anglican priest. After seminary, he worked as a parish priest for five years before returning to Cambridge to take up his

current pursuit.

A Knight of the British Empire and the only ordained member of the Royal Society, Polkinghorne's book is lyrical and compassionate, gracious and generous in its approach.

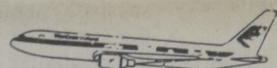
Science and theology each deal with interpreted experience and quest for truth, he says. Science conveys knowledge about how things work; religion gives it meaning and purpose, providing wisdom about what choices ought to be made.

"The more they talk together, the more likely we will be able to make sensible decisions," he says. Polkinghorne demonstrates that there is a relationship between the scientific and theological method and how the two attain their beliefs.

Concludes Polkinghorne: "If reality is generously and adequately construed, then knowledge will be seen to be one; if rationality is generously and adequately construed, then science and theology will be seen as partners in a common quest for understanding."

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Scientist 'shell-shocked' by discoveries about God

Gordon Legge

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Despite the high percentage of scientists who believe in God, many scientists and philosophers take exception to the trend to reconcile religion and science. But one confirmed philosophical atheist changed his mind when his marriage fell apart.

A poll last year in the journal *Nature* shows that 40 per cent of scientists believe in God; 15 per cent are agnostics and 45 per cent are atheists, the same percentages as in an identical poll in 1916. Then, however, biologists showed the highest rates of disbelief (69.5 per cent), while today physicists and astronomers do (77.9 per cent).

Beyond brain chemistry

Paul Kurtz, a philosopher and secular humanist who chairs the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal which publishes the *Skeptical Inquirer*, regards religious speculation as poetry, mysticism and wish-fulfillment. Moreover, the growing genre is simply market-driven by publishers pursuing a profit, says

Kurtz.

That's what Patrick Glynn thought for the longest time.

Raised in a Roman Catholic home and educated at a Jesuit school, he drifted towards agnosticism. At Harvard, while pursuing a doctorate, he honed his philosophical atheism. For two decades he lived his life accordingly and worked up the career ladder to an important position in the arms control agency in the Reagan administration.

Then six years ago, Glynn's marriage fell apart and he began to see "my working hypothesis was psychologically untenable."

As a scholar, he began examining the research related to near-death experiences. "I became convinced the brain chemistry explanations didn't cut it," he says, "and that people were experiencing another realm."

From there, he began to look at the scientific literature, where he happened upon what is known as the "anthropic principle." It suggests that the universe is not a random occurrence and that, instead, it appears to have been programmed from the first nanosecond of the

Big Bang for the realization of a single end — the creation of life.

Shell-shocked

Glynn, 46, says he was shell-shocked by his discoveries. "The recognition you'd been wrong about this has been traumatic," he says. "You realize you lived all your adult life under the wrong assumptions."

After reading a cross-section of religious literature, including New Age, Glynn turned to organized religion, first the Anglican Church and then back to Catholicism. "The nice thing about an orthodox community is that it steadies you; it counters any tendency to go off the deep end," he notes.

Next Glynn, who was already a successful author, set about writing his new book. In it he says the special uniqueness of humanity cannot be explained by the blind fumbblings of natural selection; that the power of prayer is far more profound than anyone has imagined; and that religious faith is a powerful elixir for mental health.

Politics/News

Agencies speak out on human rights violations

... continued from page 1

pretty disturbed by what Axworthy was saying.... We're concerned about inconsistencies in the Canadian government."

Rumsey is puzzled by Axworthy's plan to send observers to Chiapas. "We've been monitoring the situation since 1990," she asserts. "We've tried to document the situation and lobby the Canadian government to respond to the human rights crisis.... How much more information do [they] need?"

Although ICCHRLA regularly sends information to the government about Chiapas, Rumsey says, "We don't feel as though we're being taken seriously."

In mid-April, Axworthy and other government representatives took part in a two-day Summit of the Americas in Santiago, Chile. One major focus was how to expand free trade throughout North and South America, but human rights were barely discussed.

Members of ICCHRLA and other church and social justice groups went to Santiago for an alternative summit focused on social issues.

Long roots

The problems of Chiapas have "very long historical roots," explains Rumsey. "One is the struggle over land." Although the state's population is mostly native Indian, "they are not the majority landholders," she says.

"Chiapas is resource-rich," says Rumsey. There are "huge oil deposits and hydro-electric power capacity. The economic powers are determined they're not giving any of that over to the Indians."

Then there's the ongoing struggle between paramilitary groups, such as the Zapatistas, with the Mexican army for control of the region. In January 1994 there was a 12-day uprising by the Zapatistas which was a flashpoint. This uprising "was really about people being marginalized economically and politically," says Rumsey.

The Zapatistas wanted natives to have more rights. "The government entered into negotiation with them and in February 1995 signed an agreement on indigenous rights. Since then, talks have broken off because the Zapatistas refuse to negotiate at the point of a gun," Rumsey asserts. Recently, the Mexican government has ignored the agreement, she adds.

She believes the Mexican army has carefully planned a low-intensity war against the Zapatistas since 1994.

Rumsey has visited Chiapas twice: in early 1994, and in November 1996. On her second visit, "It seemed the rules were gone. It felt like anarchy. It was much less secure."

ICCHRLA works in Chiapas with a partner agency, the Fray Bartolome de las Casas Human Rights Centre, which was founded by social activist Bishop Samuel Ruiz. Recently, someone from the centre was shot at and wounded, reports Rumsey.

Catholic/Protestant fires

There are also continuing conflicts between Catholics and evangelical Protestants in the region, says Rumsey. One Catholic group known as Chamula has taken control of one parish and "has been usurping the land of other Catholics," she reports. "They've burnt houses and killed people." In one municipality, as many as 20,000 people were forced to flee their homes.

The Chamula group has developed a syncretic form of worship which includes offering soft drinks to various saints, she says. "They do a roaring trade in soft drinks!"

The Mexican army, which has 60,000 troops stationed in Chiapas, is another part of the problem, asserts Rumsey. "People can't plant crops because of the army occupation, so the army brings in food for people who agree with them."

Dr. Dale Kietzman, founder and president of Latin American Indian Ministries (LAIM), used to work in Chiapas with Wycliffe Bible Translators. He has similar views to Rumsey on the roots of the region's conflict.

"On the one hand you have the four-year military conflict between the Zapatista revolution and the government. Add to that the struggle between the growing evangelical Christian populace, which some say is now as high as 40 per cent, and the traditionalists or Christo-pagan Catholics who mix their old pagan practices with the Roman Catholic faith. They have run evangelical Christians off their farmlands and from their tribal communities, burning houses and killing men, women and children because of their refusal to continue in a pagan lifestyle.

We get what we deserve

The scandals surrounding Bill Clinton are interesting not only because of what they say about the U.S. President, though this in itself is worth noting. Indeed, if even some of the allegations against him are true, then it would seem to indicate a pattern of reckless behavior on his part that at the very least disregards good judgment and at most endangers his own presidency. Clinton's ultimate fate remains to be seen.

What is also telling about these episodes, however, is that they demonstrate the extent to which contemporary politics revolves around image and appearance rather than justice and integrity.

Shortly after the allegations of Clinton's affair with Monica Lewinsky were made public, the television networks were sombrely — or perhaps delightedly — forecasting an early end to his presidency. Republican congressional leaders were calling for his impeachment, and everyone waited for the expected public outcry.

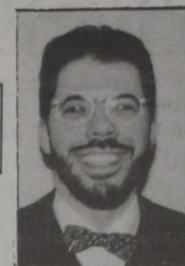
'Life is good'

But this failed to materialize. In fact, much to everyone's surprise, public opinion polls showed that Clinton not only remained popular, but had actually increased his standings with the American people. How could this be explained?

To begin with, during times of relative prosperity people are likely to be forgiving of a leader's missteps, particularly if they are of a private, personal nature. By contrast, if the American economy were suffering under the burdens of galloping inflation or widespread unemployment, the most maritally faithful president would be reviled by the citizens.

But times are good and it seems Americans prefer to be left alone to enjoy their windfall and prefer not to be bothered with their president's sexual and legal troubles.

But maybe the President's opponents simply need to be marketed better. As I write, we have learned that special prosecutor Kenneth Starr has declined a deanship offered him by Pepperdine University. Instead, he plans to continue his investigation of Clinton and to hire an aide to handle the media — apparently to court public sympathy more effectively.



David T. Koyzis

In the meantime, Republican members of Congress are beginning to worry that, if Starr fails to come up with something soon, it could hurt their own chances for re-election in November.

Ingrained consumerism

Remarkably absent from the discussion is whether justice ought to be held hostage to public opinion. There is something to be said for the argument that private foibles need not handicap or interfere with the conduct of public office. But there is also some legitimacy in asking whether someone can be trusted with the public interest who — assuming the veracity of the allegations — routinely acts irresponsibly and then deploys his staff to cover up for him afterwards.

The Redeemer College campus was recently visited by Craig Bartholomew, founder of the various Christian Worldview Networks in South Africa and elsewhere, and he spoke persuasively about Western society's captivity to the ideology of consumerism. In consumerism the economic marketplace spills over into the rest of life, subjecting even non-economic relationships to market criteria. Thus in pornography, sex becomes a commodity, and even the writing of biblical commentaries becomes a market-driven enterprise.

Such is even more obviously true of politics, particular in the television era. Incredibly, if the polls are correct, Americans seem ready to "buy" a president whom they do not entirely trust. They are buying an image as well as the prosperity that this image stands for. It has often been said that democracy gives people leaders who are as good as they are. If this is true, then America's political ills are certain to continue after Clinton is long gone.

David T. Koyzis teaches political science at Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ontario.

This has been going on for 30 years, unchecked by the authorities."

The role of LAIM in Chiapas is "to offer support to believers who are fearing for their lives in this region torn by political and religious strife," says Kietzman. He is also encouraged by the work of Chiapas Senator Pablo Salazar, the first evangelical to be elected to the Mexican Congress.

"He has been involved with helping the evangelical Indians long before he entered politics," says Kietzman. "The senator is

known and trusted by many who are not evangelicals as being very fair, concerned, and trying to work for the betterment of their lot."

Amnesty is not concerned about the roots of the Chiapas conflict, says Tackaberry. "Our concern is the range of human rights violations connected with Zapatista and government conflicts. We've been following this for quite some time."

Tackaberry commends ICCHRLA for speaking up about Chiapas. Amnesty has also been outspoken about the war.

But Tackaberry criticizes the Canadian government's handling of the issue. "Canada should speak out strongly on human rights issues in Mexico," he says. "One can question the commitment on the part of the government to human rights."

Rumsey says the government recently "missed a golden opportunity" to speak about Chiapas to the United Nations Human Rights organization. She wants Canada "to call on the Mexican government to bring those who've been committing injustices to trial."

Editorial

Where is the Supreme Court leading us?

As Christian community we always talk about making an impact on our society. Who would have dreamt that The King's University College would indirectly be responsible for a ruling by the Supreme Court of the land that instructs the province of Alberta to include sexual orientation in its human rights code. This is not exactly as planned. Not that the King's is necessarily opposed to this ruling, but it certainly would not like it if the result would be state intervention in its hiring and firing practices.

College officials are fairly positive that their right to employ people who share the college's religious values is enshrined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and in the Alberta Human Rights, Citizenship and Multiculturalism Act. But not everyone shares their optimism. In an article in *Lex View* entitled "Throwing Down the Gauntlet: the Supreme Court of Canada Defines Its Role," authors Iain T. Benson and Brad Miller, two B.C. lawyers, state the following:

"It is important not to overstate the significance of this decision. What must be

closely watched is what follows [the Vriend decision]. How the Court balances the rights of religious groups and individuals or deals with attempts by provincial legislatures to amend human rights acts to protect the conduct of citizens in the housing and employment areas will be key. For example, certain religious persons may well have a deep-seated conscience and religious objections to renting suites in their home to active homosexuals. The legislature may wish to address such a concern through amendments that balance competing interests. Or, again, should the government or court decisions begin to restrict the operation of the religious exemption provisions allowing religious groups to discriminate in certain cases, the government response will be critical."

Look at the sky

The "notwithstanding clause" in section 33 of the Charter provides provinces with some room to go against rulings by the Supreme Court, but who is to say that provinces would make use of that when it comes to an actual case of a private home or a religious institution being considered in violation of the non-discriminatory rule against active homosexual persons? It should be fairly obvious to Canadians by now that the courts and the legislatures are not far removed from the dominant trends in society. And it should be equally clear that the dominant trend in society is to declare a homosexual lifestyle acceptable and legitimate even on a moral basis.

But that's not to say that we should live in fear of such eventualities. Officials at The King's and other Christian colleges are right in moving forward confidently based on present realities. The present reality is that Alberta has been forced to fall in line with the other provinces, Prince Edward Island excluded; and the sky has not fallen in those provinces. If the outcome of the Supreme Court's ruling is that homosexual persons in Alberta must be protected against arbitrary and hateful discrimination and must have the right to employment, housing and other services, then surely we, Christians, should be in favor of that. We don't believe in other areas either that immorality is a basis for discrimination, unless such immorality threatens the very integrity of other people's lives and organizations.

Crossing the boundary

What is perhaps the most negative aspect of the Supreme Court's ruling is that it shows once again that the court has become an activist court in some areas. Courts are supposed to *interpret* the laws made by legislatures, not write them.

Benson and Miller point out in their article

that in an earlier ruling (the *Egan* decision of 1995), the Supreme Court simply read sexual orientation into the Charter, and that the Vriend ruling is based on that earlier "reading into" of the Charter. When the Charter was formed in 1982, the phrase "sexual orientation" was purposely rejected by a joint committee and that rejection was approved by the parliament and senate of that day, Benson and Miller point out. These bodies, in their decisions, protected only the sex of a person, not his or her orientation.

Yet the Supreme Court ignored that historical reality and read sexual orientation into the Charter in the *Egan* case. On the basis of that understanding of the Charter, the Court has now ordered the province of Alberta to read sexual orientation into its human rights code.

This is all the more unfortunate because even a democratic society like Canada's has no recourse against an activist court. It cannot depose the judges, who are in there for life, and it cannot vote in new judges when the others retire. Not that we would recommend a system that would elect judges and thus (it could be argued) politicize the judicial arm of government, but having such a system we do expect that judges restrict their rulings to interpretations of the law and not usurp the role of legislators.

A time for vigilance

Benson and Miller point out one more important consideration. The Charter is meant to set down principles in matters between the state and the individual (remember Trudeau's phrase "The state has no business in the bedrooms of the nation"?). Human rights legislation, on the other hand, is applied between private persons in limited areas such as employment and housing. So it does not necessarily follow that a state-oriented principle from the Charter flows into a human rights principle.

We do well to understand the trend in our society, and perhaps the Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms has contributed to that trend with its greater emphasis on the individual than on groups and communities which often espouse a philosophy or religious orientation. There is in society a greater interest in proclaiming the equality principle than in basing such principles on moral values. But equality without morality can even be practised in a society where everyone is a murderer and where people cheat and destroy each other with equal enthusiasm. We haven't reached that point, thank God, but we are headed in that direction. Think only of abortion and euthanasia practises. All the more reason to be vigilant.

BW

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Letters

Give religious leaders the benefit of the doubt

Peter Aalhuizen in his April 3 letter to the editor wonders whether we should trust religious leaders and makes reference to the fact that I was invited by Premier Glen Clark to speak at a cost of \$1000, plus expenses.

In order to prevent misunderstanding, please note the following: Indeed, I gave the opening address entitled "Faith and Justice — Poverty and Unemployment" at the first dialogue with B.C.'s religious leaders organized by Premier Clark.

The facts

Yes, I was paid \$1000 plus expenses for my research and presentation in July 1997 in Victoria. As is my custom, I donated this fee to Citizens for Public Justice, which pays my salary.

While in Victoria, I also had discussions with Premier Clark, his senior advisors and several cabinet ministers regarding: 1) the pressing problems of poverty and unemployment; 2) the controversial issue of legal-equality rights for gays and lesbians; and 3) the urgent need for a public policy approach that clearly recognizes the constitutional

rights of all citizens, institutions (such as Trinity Western University and organizations (such as the Christian Labour Association of Canada), as well as alternative and independent schools (such as those operated by Christian, Hindu, Islamic, Jewish and Sikh communities, as well as others who want to work out the integral meaning of their faith in education).

I had similar discussions with spokespersons for B.C.'s opposition parties, especially about CPJ's public justice proposals regarding legal-equality rights, including the Legislature's obligation to respect the heterosexual definition of marriage and the option of establishing in law "registered domestic partnerships" for various existing relationships.

Let's do our homework

Unfortunately, insufficient advance work had been done by all concerned, including the faith communities, to help make this option a legislative reality. We'll have to keep working and do our utmost to be of greater public service.

While we may disagree with Premier

Clark at times (I do!), he should be commended for initiating this unique consultation process. It provides meaningful opportunities for a positive biblical witness and a practical political service. I wish other premiers and our Prime Minister would initiate the same process. Maybe all our churches and spokespersons can respectfully urge all the First Ministers to follow Premier Clark's good example.

Meanwhile, all of us should do our political homework so we're ready when

an opportunity presents itself to be the political leaven, light and salt Jesus invites us to be either locally, provincially or nationally.

Peter Aalhuizen asks: "Should we trust our religious leaders?" I would say, give them the benefit of the doubt and share your constructive contribution to a credible Christian political presence. We may be surprised what will happen!

Gerald Vandezande

CPJ's National Public Affairs Director
Agincourt, Ont.

A flawed monarch in a flawed recreation

According to Marian Van Til, "Louis XIV's greatness [is] a historical fact" (film review, April 3). Since when does historical interpretation become historical fact? By what and whose standards does Louis XIV become great? Does an "arrogant, self-absorbed brat," whose "continued thoughtless action push[ed] France ever closer to the brink of social anarchy" deserve to be called great by any Christian standards?

Or what about his revocation of the Edict of Nantes, his marital infidelity, his frequent warfare to enlarge his kingdom — the list could go on and on. These comments do not detract from the quality of the movie, but they do concern Van Til's understanding of history. Her statement exemplifies how easy it is to fall into the secularist trap.

One final comment. The opening sentence of the review states that:

"This film *flawlessly* [emphasis mine] recreates Louis XIV's royal court in 17th century France." Perhaps Van Til should

have read *Past Imperfect: History According to the Movies* by Mark C. Carnes (gen. ed.), New York: Henry Holt, 1995. None of the about 80 reviewed movies were regarded as historically flawless. It's doubtful this movie is the remarkable exception to the rule.

Bert den Boggende
Lacombe, Alta.

I do have doubts about Louis XIV's greatness. That's why I put in quotation marks the word "glorious," as in: "...inducing a 'glorious' period in French history". But then I misled you by calling Louis' greatness "a historical fact" rather than a perceived historical fact.

In my saying the film "flawlessly recreates Louis XIV's royal court" I was referring to the superb sets, costuming and "authentic" visual and aural feel of the movie. Perhaps I should have made that clearer.

MVT

Kuyper's legacy explains our journey

Regarding the legacy of Abraham Kuyper, it's fairly immaterial whether as Reformed Christians in North America we label ourselves as Kuyperian or not, or whether we make some statements about Kuyper's limitations.

What is important is that we see Abraham Kuyper riding a wave of revival in the end of the last century, a Christian revival that swept all of Europe and North America and which, in the Netherlands, took on a unique development (for example, see H. Algra — *Het Wonder der 19de Eeuw*. The Miracle of the Nineteenth Century).

The contribution of the revival is a very large part of my everyday life still today as a Reformed Christian in North America. For example, last night my spouse sat in on a Christian school board meeting in Ontario, which in no way is operated by a church, a government or a business, thanks to the concept of sphere sovereignty. This weekend my daughter is coming home from a college that operates along the same lines.

One thing I know, he was a church leader, pastor, journalist and writer, as well as politician, and many of his works were translated into English. Another thing I know is that his predecessor, Groen van Prinsterer, challenged the roots of both liberalism and conservatism in a fundamental way, while today, a century later I feel almost totally surrounded by liberals and conservatives with few other alternatives.

Challenged foundations

So I feel that Kuyper does have something fundamental to say to both liberalism and conservatism. I need to understand the roots of these movements and a strategy to tackle them as a Christian. I feel that liberalism, conservatism and socialism are bankrupt, politically and economically.

A few more observations Kuyper came to speak to the fortress of American Presbyterianism on the East Coast in 1898. But at that time the heartbeat of North American Christianity had moved with the frontier to the West. Shortly after, in the beginning of this century, a movement would come from the West back to the East: Pentecostalism. Was Kuyper's major work, *The Work of the Holy Spirit*, written in 1888, anticipating this revival of the 20th century?

The 100th anniversary conference on Abraham Kuyper was a great idea. As we see the bruised reeds of the past (Matt. 12:20) holding brightly the light of Christ, may we do likewise.

Joe Reitsma
Bowmanville, Ont.

Lighting our path

The importance of knowing Kuyper's legacy (and the cloud of witnesses surrounding him) helps me know where I come from, where I am now, and clarifies where I am going.

So when Kuyper spoke, was he just a reed blowing in the wind on the east coast of the United States a hundred years ago, or did he have something substantial to say to North Americans in general and Reformed Christians in particular?

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Letters/Opinion

Good music makes good medicine

It seems not too surprising to me that patients at the London Regional Cancer centre appreciate good live music (CC March 20)!

I had two strokes since June '97 and was hospitalized for five months in total. My daughter brought a portable radio and I found a supreme Toronto radio station. There were very few annoying commercials and it plays mostly classical music. It helped me greatly getting through those months. The weeks before Christmas brought excellent choirs with beloved carols.

In a word, I had to be careful not to disturb the other patients. But soon after 8 a.m. one man

would shout, "Is your radio not working today? We miss it!" Nurses would come in and comment on the nice music.

One nurse came in and asked if I could turn up the sound a bit. "The men in Room 407 like to listen."

I am a day patient now and one nurse asked me, "Do you still listen to that nice music? Some wives of patients asked for the wavelength of the station!"

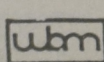
All of this is proof that good music helps patients and their visitors.

**K. Teddy Smits
Belleville, Ont.**

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The Crime of the Century

Wayne deJong

As we near the end of the 20th century we'll be doing a lot of reflecting on the events that have taken place over the last 100 years, and on what humankind has accomplished — or not. It has been a century of incredible change, especially in transportation, communications, and computer technology.

Meanwhile, the world population has exploded, showing a fourfold increase to 6.4 from 1.6 billion people. The vast, sparsely populated and still partly unexplored planet of the year 1900 has become a small, crowded and familiar neighborhood. Who, then, is our neighbor?

We'll recognize our achievements and victories, to be sure, but what about our failures and disasters? Will we be proud, or ashamed? Have we been good stewards of the planet? Have we created a just world? What will go down in history as the "Crime of the Century?" World War I? World War II? the Rape of Nanking? the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki? the Holocaust? the sinking of the *Titanic*? the genocides of Rwanda and Burundi? the ongoing wars and conflicts everywhere? or the ravishing of the fragile global environment? Which one fills you with the most pain, shame or regret?

Ten-ocide

All of these significant events are dwarfed by the sheer magnitude of human suffering and death that has resulted from hunger and poverty. Today, 800 million people still live in absolute poverty, with little hope for a better future — more than 10 per cent of the total population of the planet, and 26 times the population of Canada.

Even though the world does, at present, have enough food to provide every human being with a minimally adequate diet, 34,000 people die every day of hunger and related illnesses — 24,000 of them children. That's the equivalent of 23 *Titanics* sinking each day, the equivalent of 72 jumbo jets crashing daily with no survivors. These deaths are not generally the result of famines, floods, other natural disasters or emergencies. Most (96 per cent) are the result of chronic, persistent hunger, and happen quietly, slowly and painfully — without making headlines.

In the last 10 years alone (and this decade is no exception) 128 million people died of hunger and related illnesses — 100 million more than died in all of WWII. The Crime of the Century is that most of these deaths were preventable. With all the technological and financial resources that we have at our disposal today, these people — "the least of these, my children" — were not considered important enough to participate meaningfully in the global economy or government.

How to explain?

The Crime of the Century is that we had it in our power to eradicate poverty, not just alleviate it. We could have done it in the 20th century. The Crime of the Century is the incredible loss of human potential. How many



Famine victims such as these in Ethiopia received food and emergency aid in the mid-1980s.

Albert Einsteins, Nelson Mandelas and John Calvins were among those who never had a chance?

In the next century, what arguments could we possibly come up with to *not* make this the single overriding priority to which we apply the gospel, ourselves and all our resources?

What would Jesus do? What would Jesus say? It's a crime of complacency, a sin of omission, a crying shame.

Could we have done more? Yes! The most dangerous idea in the world is that global poverty is inevitable and irreversible. We must break this sense of complacency and powerlessness.

Like seeds

The problem is huge, but not insurmountable. Through appropriate and sustainable development programs we can turn poverty and hunger into possibility and hope. We can plant seeds of hope around the world, and show the multitudes that we love them, as Jesus loves them. We can give them an opportunity to unfold their inborn, God-given capacity and become complete persons in Christ.

Capacity is potential. We are like seeds — we need the right conditions to sprout, grow and bloom to our full potential. We in the "global north" have so much, and we have every opportunity to develop our own capacities through education, good nutrition and good health. For so many others in the "global south," however, capacity lies trapped within — a bulb not planted, a seed not watered, stunted or doomed.

The Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC) is all about capacity — realizing potential, helping people to develop their capacity, to improve their own standard of living and that of others, and to achieve positive, permanent change.

You have been blessed to be a blessing. Make a pledge today: we shall mediate God's love to every person in the world, for none of us is finished until everyone is loved. "Beloved, let us love one another."

Wayne de Jong is director of CRWRC Canada, which is based in Burlington, Ont..

Arts/Media

Analysis

Star Trek vs. Babylon 5: Will God still inhabit his heaven in 300 years?



Two Centauri and a Narn: Londo (Peter Jurasik), Vir (Stephen Furst) and G'Kar (Andreas Katsulas).

Marian Van Til

Star Trek, as most people know, just keeps on trekking. That phenomenon has provided the dominant television science fiction entertainment since the original series appeared in 1966 as an obscure object on the TV-screen horizon.

Though the original series lasted but three years, it has been floating through rerun space for three decades and has spawned three other series: *The Next Generation*, also in reruns, *Deep Space Nine* and *Voyager*, the latter two still in production. And then there are the movies....

Many things account for that magnetism, which is not the subject of these current musings. *Star Trek* was Gene Roddenberry's concept and he remained behind the whole, uh, enterprise (pardon the pun) until his death in 1991. He had an extremely optimistic view of humanity and a Buck Rogers sense of adventure.

He infused those attitudes into the plots, characters and shows' general philosophy. His enlightened views became evident in how numerous issues were handled: space travel, exploration and "first contact" with aliens; the future of humanity and even the cosmos; mundane, here-and-now social problems

(re-clothed with future garb in a way that made the contemporary message loud and clear).

'Opiate of the masses'

Part of that "enlightenment" was the belief that the human race, and any other race, would have outgrown religion a few hundred years hence (an odd assumption, given human history). Oh, religion did come up — and, after Roddenberry's grip has been loosed, does somewhat regularly in the life of one *Deep Space Nine* character (Kira Nerys) and her Bajoran people. But most characters were and are happily agnostic; or rather, happily atheistic. And those who aren't — even Kira — seem to be oddities or given to superstition rather than beings responding to a universal spiritual pull.

We former earthlings will know far too much science in that glorious future, you see, to believe that there are true metaphysical forces, that a real *God* could exist, unconstructed by human (or alien) imagination.

Almost invariably, any character who has been depicted as "religious" is taught, in the end, that such faith and the seemingly miraculous results it sometimes produces are really explainable in terms of the

physical laws of the universe.

My husband and I have commented to each other on this annoying phenomenon again and again while watching the various incarnations of *Star Trek*. It has the effect of momentarily alienating viewers of faith, making them feel, for a second, stupid and naive; but those moments add up.

Faith is alive

There is a more recent sci-fi space show, of wholly different provenance, which takes a completely different and much more satisfying approach to religion in the future. That show is *Babylon 5*. (It is unique in other ways as well.)

Babylon 5 was also conceived by one man, J. Michael Straczynski. But Straczynski deliberately constructed the multi-layered story which takes place in the 2260s with a history and a climax, to play out over a five-year period.

Babylon 5 is a huge space station, earth-run but in neutral space, which, after four previous "Babylons" were destroyed or mysteriously disappeared, was to act as "the last best hope for peace" between Earth and the dozens of alien races who were

expanding into each others' parts of the galaxy.

That very name, *Babylon*, with its biblical connotations of pride gone rampant, should be the early clue that things religious are very different here than in the *Star Trek* universe.

Christian faith, exhibited in Roman Catholicism and other forms, is alive and well in 2260. So is Judaism. And then there are the various alien religions and their devout practitioners.

Among the major characters, Minbari Ambassador Delenn comes from a people who are highly spiritual and have rituals for every act and event in life. Ambassador G'Kar from Narn highly prizes a Bible-like book to which he looks for spiritual guidance. And miracles really do happen, without explanation from scientists waiting to debunk them. Human problems have not been overcome with progress and sweet thinking. And we know no one on *Babylon 5*, in front of or behind the cameras, thinks they ever will be.

Especially interesting to me is that the dialogue of the human characters is peppered from week to week not only with literary but biblical allusions —

allusions with which Straczynski assumes viewers will still be familiar ("He died more times than Lazarus," etc.).

Periodically there are discussions about religion — a character asking another if he believes in God, and waiting to get a real answer; another character asking for advice about adopting religious funeral rituals for her father which she had thought (wrongly) had no meaning for her.

Ironically, there is a wonderful kind of earthiness about this space-oriented life in the future (this society also has an underbelly — something one doesn't see in *Star Trek*). It's an earthiness which seems to see us as creatures in relation to a Creator.

I haven't been able to find out anything about Michael Straczynski's own beliefs (if any reader has, I'd be happy to hear about it). For various reasons, I suspect he may be a "lapsed" Catholic. Whatever he is, he has a religious sensitivity with which he has infused his show, making it at once more real and more satisfying than the *Star Trek* franchise. I say that as a convert. It took me a while to get over *Star Trek*. But *Babylon 5* was just the ticket.

CRTC asked to investigate Q107 re: access to obscene web site

CC Staff, with C-CAVE files

TORONTO — A complaint has been filed with the CRTC against Toronto radio station Q107 for providing access to a bestiality web site through its Howard Stern links. Q107 is owned by Western International Communications (WIC).

In January the station said the links to the site — identified as one of Howard Stern's "past favorite web sties of the day" — had been deleted. But the station left one link in place, where it remains.

The Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) was advised in January of the situation with Q107 and the bestiality web site, but has since indicated it will do nothing because Q107 had reportedly deleted the link.

Valerie Smith, a volunteer for Canadians Concerned About Violence in Entertainment

(C-CAVE), had contacted the police, believing that the site contravened the Criminal Code obscenity law. She has since received confirmation that the bestiality web site is, indeed, illegal under Canadian law.

Prosecution doubtful

It is not yet clear, however, if the Criminal Code as currently written can be used to prosecute a company for providing links to obscene web sites.

Smith and C-CAVE say the

CRTC's reaction — or what they would call lack of reaction — "is an outrage." Smith says, "It means that broadcasters can do whatever harmful, hateful, disgusting thing they want — like provide access to a bestiality web site — as long as they stop it at some point!"

Smith wonders why the government media regulators "are so afraid of [shock jock] Howard Stern." She asserts, "Their lack of courage has been a real inspiration to Q107."

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Church

Calgary churches uniting on gambling is powerful ecumenical example

Gordon Legge

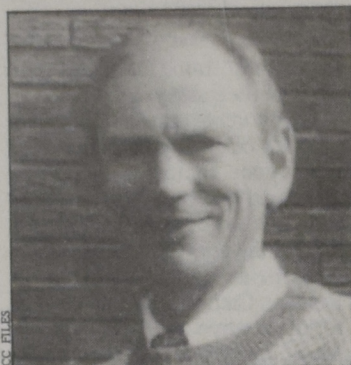
CALGARY — "I have never seen all of these leaders gathered in this room for any issue." That was the sentiment expressed by Rev. Michael Reitsma as he surveyed a hotel room filled with pastors and priests from across the city of Calgary just before Easter. Reitsma is pastor of First Christian Reformed Church and president of the 200-member Calgary Evangelical Ministerial Association.

That ecumenical gathering on March 21 demonstrated a united effort among Calgary churches to come together to launch a petition calling for a vote on whether video lottery terminals should be removed from the city.

In an unprecedented display of unity, the most diverse cross-section of Christian denominations and faith groups assembled in the city in recent memory has been pulled together for the VLT petition campaign which began April 6. They've come a long way. Just a few years ago a couple of ministers at one of the city's leading Pentecostal church's got into trouble with some of their elders for dialoguing with Catholics.

Getting more done together

Many observers think that if the religious community can succeed in holding up its end in the petition drive it will pave the



Rev. Michael Reitsma

way for similar united action on other social issues. But church coalition organizer Rev. Jim Wallace, pastor of South Calgary Community Church in Oakridge, says, "We didn't set out to be a model. We set out to get a job done. In the process, we realized we could get more done if we sat down together."

The gathering would have made the most ardent ecumenists envious: Catholics and Calvinists, Presbyterians and Pentecostals, Mennonites and Mormons. Virtually every segment of the more than 400 churches in the Calgary area was represented. Even the Muslim community was present. And although the Jewish community is "neutral" on the issue, Rabbi Moshe Saks, of the city's largest Jewish congregation, says he would have been there had he known about the meeting. "I look forward to participating in it in the future."

Many seeds, deep roots

The seeds for the historic gathering were many and varied:

- In the '60s, Fr. Pat O'Byrne teamed up with Rabbi Louis Ginsberg and a handful of Protestant ministers to start the Calgary Inter-Faith Community Action Association. That initiative continues to spawn both interdenominational and interfaith activity, particularly around social justice issues.

- In 1981 many Christian denominations came together for a Billy Graham crusade. And again in 1988 they rallied to stage an Olympic Winter Games outreach.

- In 1988 a small group of conservative Christian ministers began praying together for unity among the Christian churches. Their effort spawned Hope Calgary, a movement designed to bring Christian renewal and revival. It eventually was disbanded but fostered new trust and a range of relationships among ministers that is bearing fruit today.

- A decade ago, the Anglican, Lutheran and Roman Catholic bishops began meeting together over lunch to discuss issues of

common concern, speaking out against poverty, pornography and gambling. In Fall 1996 they signed an historic covenant agreeing to co-operate as much as possible in all areas.

- The VLT issue was given a boost by the arrival last month of Calgary's new Roman Catholic bishop, Most Rev. Frederick Henry, who voiced his ardent opposition to VLTs even before taking office and took on Premier Ralph Klein.

"...The general public doesn't really care about our theological differences but they do care about our ethical voice," says Wallace. "God is not United Church or Roman Catholic or any one thing. This is God's way of saying, 'I want all my faith communities to work together for mending my Earth.'"

'A very public faith'

Anglican Archbishop Curtis adds, "This certainly can't do anything but bode well for future possibilities." Curtis disagrees vehemently with those who suggest that churches have no place in the public square. "It would be an abdication of our responsibility if we stayed

within our four walls and sang hymns."

The church has been sidelined by the privatization of faith during the 20th century, he says. "There's nothing private about the Christian faith. It's a very public faith."

No 'failure' possible

And what if these shepherds fail to deliver the flock on the VLT issue? What if local Christians hide behind their crosses?

VLT petition organizers are counting on the churches to deliver about 60,000 names in 60 days, about 60 per cent of the signatures required.

"In my mind we're already successful even though a single signature has not been collected," Wallace said on the eve of the campaign.

An unsuccessful effort may affect the church community's credibility, Wallace admits. But new relationships have been built, new bridges constructed, new levels of trust established.

"Scripture says nothing is impossible with God. This task is not impossible. I have great faith and I think the people of God will come through."

U.S. Senate passes resolution supporting public display of 10 Commandments

WASHINGTON, D.C. (EP)

— The U.S. Senate has approved a resolution supporting public display of the Ten Commandments in government buildings and courthouses. The measure passed by a voice vote April 2 after language was added to clarify that such displays should not be done in a manner that violates the American Constitution's First Amendment's prohibition on government establishment of religion.

The non-binding resolution does not have the force of law, but is meant to convey the "sense of the Senate." A similar resolution was passed last year in the House.

The Senate resolution says "the public display, including display in the Supreme Court, the Capitol building, the White House, and other government offices and courthouses across the nation, of the Ten Commandments should be permitted, as long as it is consistent with the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment of the U.S.

Constitution."

The qualifying language regarding the establishment clause was added at the insistence of Sen. Frank Lautenberg (D-N.J.).

Barry Lynn, executive director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State, criticized the measure as "shameless political posturing." He said, "I have a commandment for the Senate: Thou shalt not play politics with religion."

The resolutions were inspired by an ongoing controversy in

Alabama, where a judge has hung the Ten Commandments in his courtroom and begins his court sessions with prayers. The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) sued Judge Roy Moore to make him stop the practices, but a court ruled that the ACLU did not have standing to bring the lawsuit.

Alabama Gov. Fob James had pledged to call out state troopers and the National Guard if they were needed to protect Moore's religious rights.


'Christian Brothers' apologize

DUBLIN, Ireland (EP) — The Christian Brothers, a Roman Catholic lay order that played a significant role in Ireland's education system, apologized last month for the physical and sexual abuse students suffered in its schools.

Ads published in Irish newspapers acknowledged that the church had ignored the abuse, and provided hotline

phone numbers set up for pupils who were mistreated.

According to Britain's national news agency, a spokesperson for the group said, "It is painful for all of us, that cannot be denied. But we believe it is worthwhile. The objective of bringing about reconciliation and healing is worth the price we have to pay."



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Church

Churches want Zimbabwe to be officially Christian



Harare, the capital and largest city of Zimbabwe.

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (REC) — Zimbabwe needs to have one religion that is official, according to the Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC). The council will make a formal request to Robert Mugabe, Zimbabwe's president, that the country be declared a Christian nation. Zimbabwe is currently a "secular" nation with freedom of worship.

Densen Mafinyane, the general secretary for the ZCC, said, "It would only be proper and logical to declare the nation a Christian country. Other coun-

tries have declared themselves Muslim countries, and why should we not be proud to declare our country a Christian nation?" Mafinyane said other religions could continue to exist. He estimated that 65 per cent of Zimbabwe's 12 million people are Christian.

Less than two per cent of Zimbabwe's people are Muslim. In the drought of 1992, tension arose when the government accused Islamic governments of trying to spread Islam through food distribution.

Japan considers bill to restrict Christian organizations

TOKYO (Compass) — Non-profit organizations in Japan may have to end any involvement with prayer and worship, according to a bill under consideration in the Japanese Parliament. The bill is in response to the efforts of Christian relief organizations after the 1995 Kobe earthquake.

To be a non-profit agency in Japan, the bill says, "the main purpose... should not be to propagate or to conduct religious ceremonies, or to educate and nourish believers." The bill would allow police to enter

offices of such organizations and search the member lists.

Christians say the bill violates the Japanese constitution and the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights. Shiro Amakusa of the Keikyo Institute said the true purpose of the bill was to silence any opposition to the religious system.

In a 1995 law on religious organizations, legal requirements for churches were increased. That law, however, exempted other groups formed before 1869, the year the first church was established in Japan.

CRC agencies join anti-racism workshop

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (REC) — Serious and effective dismantling of institutional racism requires a long-term commitment. It could take 20 years, according to Joseph Barndt. Barndt, director of Crossroads Ministry, led an anti-racism workshop for the officials in

North America (CRC). The workshop covered three days, March 26-28.

The CRCNA has long been involved in multicultural ministry and seeks to become a multi-ethnic church. However, the church also needs to recognize the damaging effects of institu-

Home for the barren

"He raises the poor from the dust and lifts the needy from the ash heap, to make them sit with princes, with the princes of his people. He gives the barren woman a home, making her the joyous mother of children" (Ps.113:7-8).

During Eastertide, the daily lectionary assigns Psalm 113 to be read every Thursday evening. Since my church has a Thursday evening service of evening prayer and communion at which we use the daily lectionary, we are reading this psalm together every week.

It's not a very long psalm. The first four verses talk about God's greatness and power, calling on all the servants of the Lord throughout all time ("from this time on and forevermore") and throughout all space ("from the rising of the sun to its setting") to praise the Lord. For "the Lord is high above all nations, and his glory above the heavens."

Having established the transcendent "otherness" and immense height of God, the psalmist then praises the Lord for the way in which he interacts with those who are very lowly. From his elevated throne, the Lord our God "looks far down on the heavens and the earth." He looks down and he raises up, for the Lord is not looking down to admire princes or to congratulate himself on the creation of the wise and powerful. Rather, he looks at the poor, the needy and the barren.

'Barrenness' to be pitied?

As a woman who has never borne children and does not expect to, I find it a bit disconcerting to see myself pictured in this psalm as the lowliest of the lowly, more to be pitied even than the poor and needy. I remember leaving a church service in anger once, some 15 years ago, because my pastor had prayed for "the sick, the shut-in, the infirm and the single." I was deeply affronted at the suggestion that singleness was an infirmity, meriting prayer, in the same way as having cancer or a debilitating illness. I have some of the same response to this psalm. Why should childlessness be equated with poverty and neediness?

Of course, we know that in the culture of the ancient Near East a woman without children was a woman without protection, a woman who would be left vulnerable to abuse and neglect as she grew old, a woman who would have no resources with which to provide for herself. In that culture, women found their identity only as wives and mothers, and not to be a mother was to lack a purpose for life.

Given such a culture, God's grace would certainly be seen in the gift of children. But wouldn't it be better if God had challenged the

Chapter & Verse



Wayne Brouwer
Andrew Kuyvenhoven
● Laura Smit
Al Wolters

culture itself? Wouldn't it make more sense if the psalm extolled God's ability to give the barren woman a home, meaning, purpose and identity *without* needing to give her children?

Family doesn't come first

Perhaps that would be a bit much to expect from the psalmist. But it's not too much to expect from God. The New Testament makes clear that in the new covenant God does exactly this. In the new covenant, the biological family is no longer our primary source of identity. Instead, we find meaning and purpose from our place in the family of God, the Church.

This is not to disparage the role of Christian families, but merely to say that the nuclear family of which we are a part should be contained within the context of the Church, and it is from that context that it draws its importance. Those of us who are not part of such conventional families are still part of the Church, still children of God, still the recipients of his elevating grace.

Further, fruitfulness and productivity are no longer defined in terms of bearing children, but rather in terms of work for the Kingdom of God. Parenting children is still one way — and a very precious way — to lead new believers into God's Kingdom, but it is not the only way. It was not the Apostle Paul's way. Those of us who have never given birth to children may still, like Paul, be the parents of many spiritual children. All of us who have ever taken the congregation's vows at baptism are committed to our church's children, and all of us who have ever shared the gospel with another person and seen that person come to Christ have become in some sense parents.

The promise of the psalm continues to be kept, but not always in ways which the psalmist would have recognized. Through the community of the Church, God is still lifting up those who are looking down upon by the rest of the world, bringing joy to those who are sorrowing, purpose to those who question their purpose. It is the Church which is called to be home to the barren woman, and it is in the Church that we all are to become the joyous parents of many children.

Laura Smit is a pastor in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) who is nearly at the end of her doctoral studies in philosophy aesthetics at Boston University, Boston, Mass.

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Feature

Saskia Sjaarda's Silver Story

Sneek, Friesland, May 1710

Janet Sjaarda Sheeres

Frans Sjaarda, master silversmith, carefully wrapped and stowed the last piece of silver into his travel bag, all the while giving final instructions to his sixteen-year-old daughter, Saskia. "Remember what I've taught you and you'll be alright. If you do need help, you can always call on Master Robynsma — he'll be glad to help you."

"I'll be fine, Father." Saskia shook her head, indicating she would not need help. "Please don't worry. Just enjoy yourself in Leeuwarden."

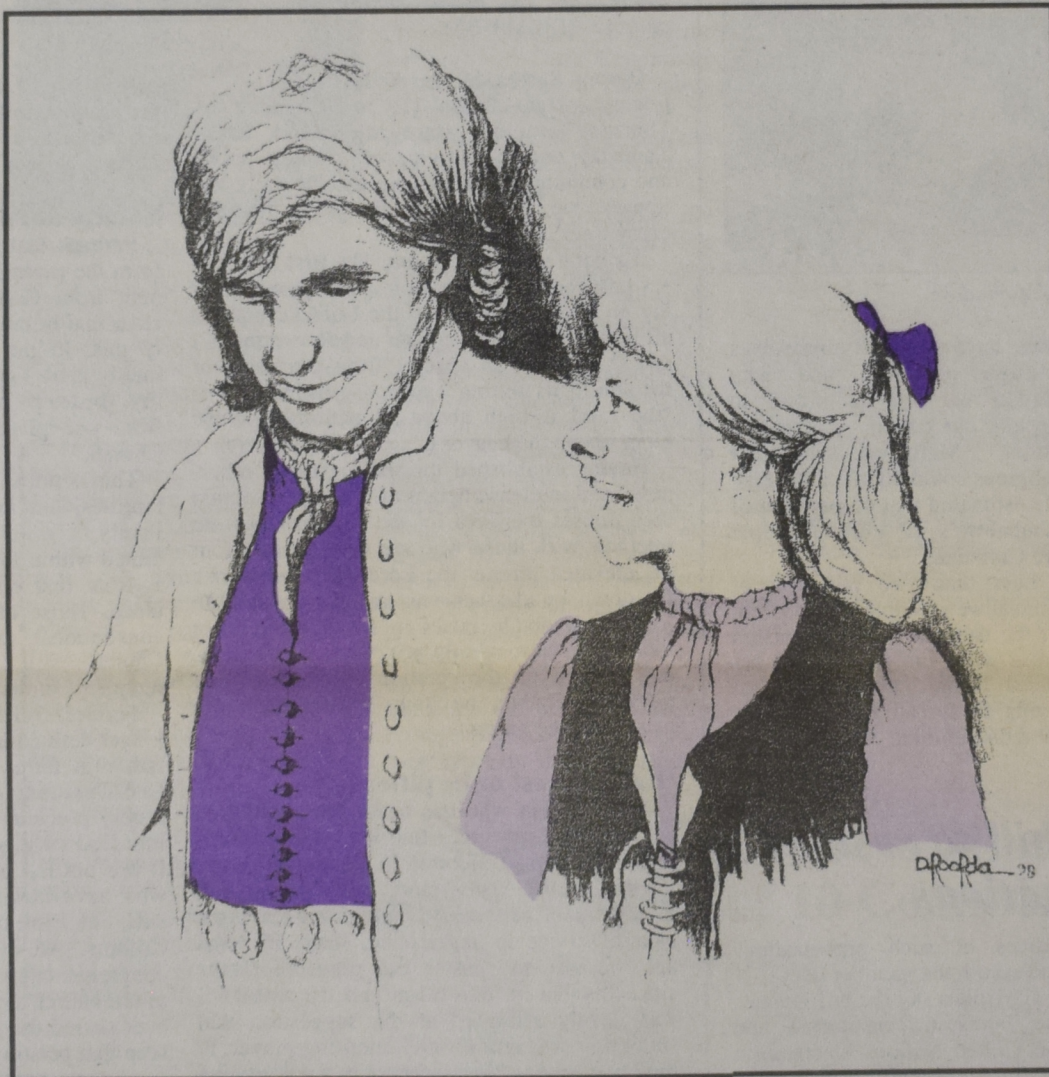
She helped him adjust the heavy bag over his shoulder, glad he had to carry it only from the shop to the canal boat which would transport him to the city of Leeuwarden, Friesland's capital. As master silversmith, Frans Sjaarda often travelled to various silver exhibitions with his own work and to adjudicate the work of other guild members.

Frans Sjaarda had trained his daughter well during the four years that preceded his trip to Leeuwarden. He had explained to her why he sold only the pieces which he himself had made or had bought from estate sales or other reputable dealers, and never from people coming in to pawn something.

Besides, he would caution her, how do we know that the stuff was not stolen? When the owner comes looking for it, we'd have to give it back, and lose on the deal. Or worse, he would point out, the need to settle a gambling debt could bring in all kinds of riffraff looking for quick cash. On this one matter Father was adamant — their shop should not look like a pawn shop, debasing the quality of their merchandise.

Saskia soon demonstrated an innate aptitude for assessing the worth and quality of a piece of silver. On his previous absences Frans Sjaarda had closed his shop, but now, proud of his daughter's accomplishments, he believed she was ready to take over the shop while he went to Leeuwarden.

Saskia could not believe how fast the first day without Father had flown by. Late in the day, as she began preparing to close the shutters, one more customer entered the shop. An old woman,



seemingly in some distress, asked to see her father.

"Father is not here," Saskia answered, "but perhaps I can help you."

"I want to sell a piece of silver — a piece of fine silver," the woman said, producing a small bundle from inside her cloak. She unwrapped it and set the contents on the counter.

"We don't buy used silver..."

Saskia's terse response stopped in mid sentence when she saw the silver object, caught in a shaft of late afternoon sun still visible from the shop window. She recognized it at once as one of the famous little Frisian *knotjes*, or wedding chests, which a rich groom would give to his betrothed as an engagement gift. Her knowledgeable eye immediately appraised the piece as being of superior craftsmanship.

Carefully she lifted the treasure to check the date and the artisan.

"The letter O stands for the year 1665. The feather and plume is van der Lely's mark..." Saskia's voice dropped to a whisper. "Master van der Lely is one of the great silversmiths," she added, as she looked at the woman in front of her with new respect. Who would ever want to sell such a superb object? she thought, and asked, "Why do you want to sell this?"

Across the counter, the older woman appraised the younger woman, much like Saskia appraised the silver piece. She, too, admired what she saw. The young woman was lovely to look at — an intelligent face, a head crowned with blonde braids — a true Frisian beauty.

"Unless I come up with the money today, I cannot pay the

rent on our farm. My grandson and I will be put out on the street. Times are tough. I need the money."

Although Saskia's heart ached for the old lady — she looked so heartbroken and desperate — Saskia's head knew she had to tell the woman that father did not buy people's silver. But even more than wanting to help the woman, a desire to own this beautiful object herself began to master her.

Cradling the treasure in her hands, she admired its engravings — a pair of lovers and a heart intricately entwined with flowers. She checked for scratches or imperfections but found none.

"How much?"

"Fifty florins."

Shocked for a moment at the amount, Saskia knew it was a

fair price. She also knew there were enough florins in the cabinet. She had taken in that much herself by selling several pieces. But still, Father would not approve her taking the money without permission. Perhaps if Father saw the piece himself he would surely wish to buy it. "Can you come back when my father is home in a day or two?" she asked.

"No, I must have the money today — the landlord has someone else waiting to take over unless I meet my obligation. He says he's been patient too long."

Saskia's mind whirled. The poor woman's needs and her own desire clashed with Father's rules. Still, what had the pastor said in the sermon last week? We must bear one another's burdens. Was it not her duty, she rationalized, if she had the money to help this poor woman?

"Please wait," she told the woman. Going into the inner room she unlocked the cabinet with the money chest, and counted out the fifty florins. Quickly drafting a bill of sale, she asked the woman to sign it. Trembling, the old woman wrote her name — Sybilla Harinxma. As she carefully tied the florins into the cloth which previously had protected the wedding chest, she muttered, "*Tige tank, famke, tige tank.*"

Alone with her treasure, Saskia gazed lovingly at the little chest, admiring its perfection. How I would love to receive one just like this one, she thought. Perhaps a rich young man would buy it for his bride and Father would get the money back.

Thinking about Father, she realized she would have to tell him what she had done and that she had disobeyed him. She had been told not to buy second-hand silver, and what else had Father said: What if the stuff was stolen?

Suddenly Saskia's face flushed hot and red. What if the old lady had stolen this precious box and soon the real owners would come looking for it? They would be able to describe it in detail and demand it back.

Oh no! Saskia agonized, what have I done? Why had the old woman come to their shop and not gone somewhere else? Had other silversmiths seen through her story? What would Father

say when he came home?

Hastily Saskia wrapped up the little box and hid it on the top shelf as if it being out of sight it would also be out of her mind. But just the opposite happened — she could not stop thinking about it and worrying what Father would say when he found out.

Her first day in the shop alone and she had fallen for an old woman's story. She had given out money without permission, because she had let some old lady talk her out of it. By the time her mother called for the evening meal, Saskia had no appetite for the bread with butter and cheese she usually ate so heartily.

That night as Saskia tossed and turned, and her mind raced to find a way out of her predicament, she fashioned a plan. She would take the little casket and go from silversmith to silversmith in town, sell it herself, and put the money back before Father came home. Any silversmith seeing the little chest would surely want to buy it. With that thought in mind, she finally fell asleep.

The next day Saskia anxiously looked for a chance to close shop and be on her errand. When by mid-morning all was quiet, she shuttered the windows and locked the door. Before heading out on her mission, Saskia took out the little box to look it over once more. Her heart pounding, she knew she would do anything to keep the box. There seemed to be something special about it — as if it was meant for her. Still, she had no choice; she must try to sell it before Father came home.

Tenderly she wrapped it up again and, telling her mother she needed to run some errands, headed into the city — the precious box held tightly under her cloak.

Normally Saskia enjoyed her walks through the city. Sneek, although not as large as some other cities, had a charm all its own. Many artisans had made Sneek their home and the shops reflected the beauty and abundance of goods. Saskia's path took her past the Sheep Square to Market Street to the silver shop of Master Robynsma.

Getting closer to his store,

doubts began to nibble at her plan. Even if Master Robynsma was willing to buy the casket, would he not sooner or later tell Father what he had bought from her? Could she ask him, as a favor, not to say anything? Oh how complicated this was getting.

A young man, even more in a hurry than Saskia, entered Robynsma's shop just ahead of her. Disregarding her, the young man asked the clerk, "*Mijnheer*," was there an elderly woman here yesterday selling a silver wedding box?" Startled, Saskia

to come with me and check it out?"

"Then you have seen it!" he said, planting himself firmly in front of her. Saskia, fully facing him, looked into an open, handsome face with blue eyes full of concern.

Manoeuvring herself away from him and out the door, she did not respond until well out of Master Robynsma's shop and the clerk's hearing. "What if I have seen the box? Why do you care? Do you know the old woman? You mean she wasn't a th...."

shop somewhere — a bookstore — or something like that. Let someone else rent the farm for all I care." The words came out in a torrent of emotions.

Saskia looked at him admiringly — such love for his grandmother and her keepsake — what a kind young man! Touched by his account, she wanted to give him the box and tell him, here it is take it and give it back to her. But Father's stern face flashed before her. No, she would be cautious this time. She asked, "Do you have the money to pay for it then?"



listened to the conversation. "No, I've seen no silver wedding box," the clerk responded brusquely. But the young man continued, "Are there more silver shops in town then? Can you tell me where?"

"Well, there is Master Sjaarda's but he does not trade in pawned goods either. Here is his daughter right now — you can ask her. That's right, isn't it, Saskia?"

"Yes, yes, of course. Father doesn't. But wait, maybe.... I think there was such a woman with a wedding box in our shop." Turning to the young man, she asked, "Do you want

Fortunately, the young man interrupted before Saskia could finish her sentence. "Yes, I know her," he said, "she's my *beppe*." I just found out today she sold the little chest *pake* gave her as a wedding gift. She sold it to pay the farm rent. But I would sooner she keep the box. It is the only thing she has left from *pake*. *Beppe* raised me after my parents died. We did all right but with the drought last year and the year before, we can't afford the rent.

"I told *beppe* before, I don't care that much for farming — my heart just isn't in it. I would much sooner manage my own

"Of course," he smiled, producing a bag of coins from his doublet.

"But, won't your *beppe* be upset when she finds out what you are doing?"

"No, not anymore. We talked about it this morning. She's finally seeing it my way. Only," he added sheepishly, "I was in such a hurry, I forgot to ask her which shop she brought it to."

Walking back to the Sjaarda shop together, the young man introduced himself. He told her his name was Hart Harinxma and that his family had lived *klokslag* Sneek for generations. All too soon, they were back in

the shop. Too soon, Saskia thought, for she had enjoyed listening to Hart talk about his plans and his family.

Once inside the shop, and Saskia produced the box from inside her cloak, Hart exclaimed, laughingly, "You had it all along!" He then unwrapped the florins and deposited them on the counter next to the box. Saskia, hesitant to hand it over, said softly, "It's a beautiful box — the most beautiful one I've ever seen," and added wistfully, "I wish I would get one just like this one — one, not only so beautiful, but with such good memories associated with it."

Young Hart Harinxma smiled at her, "Perhaps you just might someday, Saskia Sjaarda," he said, winking at her as he left the shop.

Two weeks later, to the day, Hart returned to the shop. Saskia, surprised and happy to see him again, realized how much he had been in her thoughts these two weeks. Seeing no one else around, he told her of his plans.

"We had a *boelgoed* and sold our livestock and implements," he told her. "With the proceeds I've rented a small house here in town for *beppe*. I have signed on a merchant vessel to the East Indies I may be gone for a year but when I come back, I will be able to buy my own small shop. Will you visit *beppe* from time to time, Saskia? She would like that very much. And I would like that as well," he added, looking at her with affection.

Blushing at this sudden attention, Saskia promised she would keep an eye on both *beppe* and the box.

After Hart left, Saskia thought, she would probably tell her Father someday about her purchase and sale, but for now she wanted to keep the memory of it as a fine treasure in her heart.

Notes: 1. *tige tank*: Frisian for thank you so much. 2. *Famke*: Frisian for girl; 3. *Mijnheer*: Dutch for sir; 4. *Beppe*: Frisian for grandmother; 5. *Klokslag*: an old Dutch expression for living within hearing distance of the church bell of a city or town; 6. *Boelgoed*: Dutch for Auction/Estate Sale.

Mother's Day

Book Review

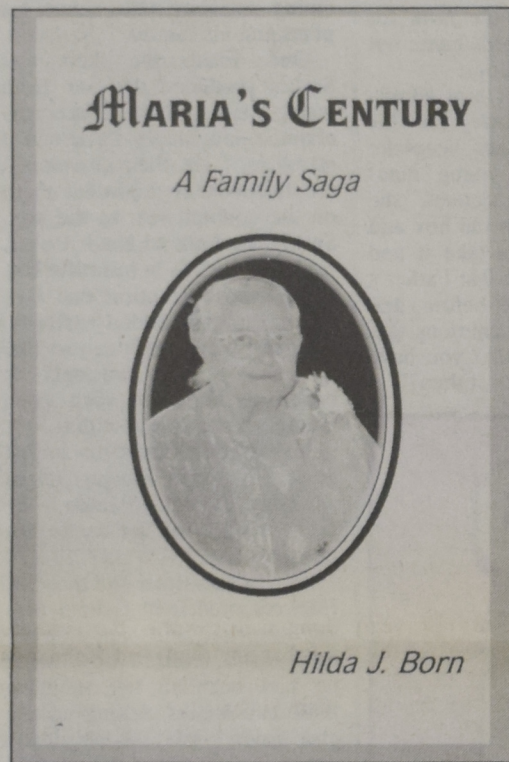
Family narrative traces 20th century events

Bert Witvoet

Maria's Century: a Family Saga

By Hilda J. Born.

Abbotsford, B.C.: Imprint Press Pub., 1998. 191 pp. \$20.



What better way to honor mothers on Mother's Day than to review Hilda Born's biography of her mother, Maria Martens. Hilda Born, who has written for *Christian Courier* and other publications, and has recently won the Grand Prize in the *Chatelaine's* "You Make Chatelaine Contest," traces the biography of her 97-year-old mother from a hard life in Ukraine to an equally challenging immigrant life in

Canada. The story is told from Maria's point of view.

Maria, born in 1900, was 19 when savage marauders terrorized the southeast region of Ukraine and raped, robbed and murdered people at will. In one fearful night she lost her brother Wilhelm, brother-in-law Peter Bahnmann, two uncles and 14 cousins.

Maria's family immigrated to Blumenort, Saskatchewan, in 1924. From there on the story reads like that of many pioneers.

Life was hard and yet warm because of strong family ties and a deep faith in God's protection. The family experienced sickness and death, births and weddings, hunger and plenty. The dust storms of the early '30s meant little farm income. Struggles in the church about what language to use overshadowed the birth of a child.

It is clear from the start that Hilda Born's book about her mother is first of all meant for her own family. She includes many intricate details about cousins and grandparents, and there is little analysis of events and situations.

But while one follows the thread of Maria's life, one is ex-



Hilda Born (top) with her mother, Maria Loepp

posed to some major historical events, such as the Communist revolution in Russia, the flow of immigration into Canada, the Great Depression and conditions during the Second World War. One also gets a detailed account

of what life was like without modern conveniences, as well as a glimpse into the world of Mennonite life and religion.

But the main character is, of course, the interest of the story. Great courage and a quiet faith mark Maria.

Still active and faithful

"Life on the prairies is very taxing," she relates through her daughter Hilda. "Johan [her husband] stayed out too long one evening, trying desperately to get the field work done before a hoped-for rainfall. The rain didn't come, but his lungs filled with dust and pained excruciatingly. He could not breathe and felt that he would collapse right there. His fervent pleas to God for renewed breath and life were answered. However, there was little to show for his hard work."

According to an article in the *Abbotsford & Mission News*, Hilda Born's mother "is still active and enjoys travelling and visiting with family and friends.... Maria's positive spirit and strong religious faith are an inspiration to those around her."

Mother's surprise move

Felicia Brichoux

A wonderful thing happened to my mom — but it seemed anything but wonderful at the time.

Oh, I knew it might happen someday. Mother was finding it hard to get out for groceries anymore, and though she didn't say so, I knew the hours dragged between phone calls from her friends. The words "retirement home" buzzed in the back of my mind like a pesky bee.

But I dragged my feet: it would be difficult to find a suitable place, and harder still for Mother to leave her home of 26 years. She couldn't take along huge trunks of her things, and it would tear her apart to leave behind a treasured bowl, a packet of letters, a favorite book.

Then suddenly, Mother was gone. It turned out she'd put her name on a waiting list, and it reached the top sooner than she expected. Before I knew it she

was off, with hardly a proper good-bye, to a retirement home seemingly worlds away.

I was left to pick up the pieces and dispose of items she hadn't had time to pack. Now it was my turn to shed a few tears over the same keepsakes Mother had clung to earlier, familiar objects always in sight while I was growing up.

Ideal environment

But as for Mother, not to worry about her. In a twinkling she entered such a whirl of new friends and activities that she had no time (or inclination) to write or phone.

Providentially, gifted writers have described the place, so I know a bit about it: a sturdy structure with no moths or rust or thievery. A gated community, of course.

Mother, never much for exercise before, now enjoys strolling along the pebbled paths, a lovely golden color. She never com-

plains about aches and pains anymore, and her varicose veins don't seem to bother her at all.

They say it's as if the sun shines brighter there, and the air is pure. No wonder the aging process seems reversed.

And the halls ring with music: someone is always singing or

They say it's as if the sun shines brighter there, and the air is pure. No wonder the aging process seems reversed.

practicing an instrument. There's a premier choir, and Mother, whose only arias were hymns rendered at the kitchen sink, sings soprano.

Open door policy

I had thought Mother's days of developing her talents were

over, but it seems they're just beginning.

No wonder she is too busy (or too happy) to keep in touch. And Mother, always the "networker," finds her neighbors even more cordial than the literature had promised. A number of her cronies moved in before she did, so it's been almost like going home. Perhaps living in that ideal climate improves everyone's disposition.

Crotchety friends have mellowed, and a couple of her new acquaintances are real angels. The creative mind behind the establishment is the owner-manager. Wealthy as he is, he isn't one of those landlords who lives way across town. A former carpenter himself, he has a room right on the main floor, and his door is always open.

Often he invites residents to his dinner table, where they reminisce about their pre-retirement days. As they talk about some past act or project, their

gracious host is forever affirming them. "Well done" is his favorite expression.

Each person feels like the favorite guest. And Mother finds him comfortably low-tech: no computerized registry, only names hand-written in a very large book. He shares administrative decisions with even the humblest residents. Clearly, Mother is better off there. If only it weren't so far away.

Still, her new home sounds so ideal, I've put in my name to move there someday myself. With her new lease on life, I won't be surprised to spot Mother running out to the front gate to meet me.

The name of the place? Let's just call it the perfect Rest Home.

Felicia Brichoux lost her mother some years ago and discovered that putting her sense of loss in the form of an allegory helped her a great deal. She lives in Anaheim, California.

Sports

After the Buzzer

00:00



Tim Antonides

'Cutting' time

I've been coaching Grades 6 and 7 girls' basketball for a number of years now. I love it. I far prefer coaching girls than boys — they work harder, listen better, and don't have the man-sized egos that many boys do. I don't want to get into a battle of the sexes, though.

Every winter, before the season starts, about 60 girls show up for try-outs. I tell them right off the bat that only 20 of them will make the team. They all smile and nod their heads to indicate they understand.

The try-out begins. We run laps and do sprints. Some fly ahead of the others, while some huff, puff and wheeze their way around the gym. We start shooting practice. I can tell immediately who has a great shot and who is having a hard time. At the end of the try-out, I give one more speech to explain that I will have to cut over half of them from making the team. They all smile and nod again.

After a couple of more try-outs, I post the long-awaited list of girls who have made the team. Twenty thrilled girls run to tell their friends the news. Many of the rest either walk away dejected, sulk or even cry. What follows is predictable: a phone call from one or two concerned parents, angry murmurings in the hall by some who have been cut, and the same question in the staff room: Why do we put ourselves and our kids through this every year?

Too much sugar

There is a definite contradiction here. On the one hand, we want our kids to feel successful and fulfilled. At the same time, however, we want to help them discover their God-given gifts and, just as importantly, be realistic about those gifts.

Conversely, I get tired of the smiley, sugar-coted "everyone can be good at everything" perspective. We've all been blessed with different gifts. Not all 60 of the girls who try out for basketball are gifted in the sport. Though they are fragile 11- and 12-year-olds, they also need to realize where their gifts lie and to begin to develop a realistic sense of areas of personal excellence. This may sound harsh; still, I think an important part of helping each other unfold our gifts is to instill some realism in the whole process.

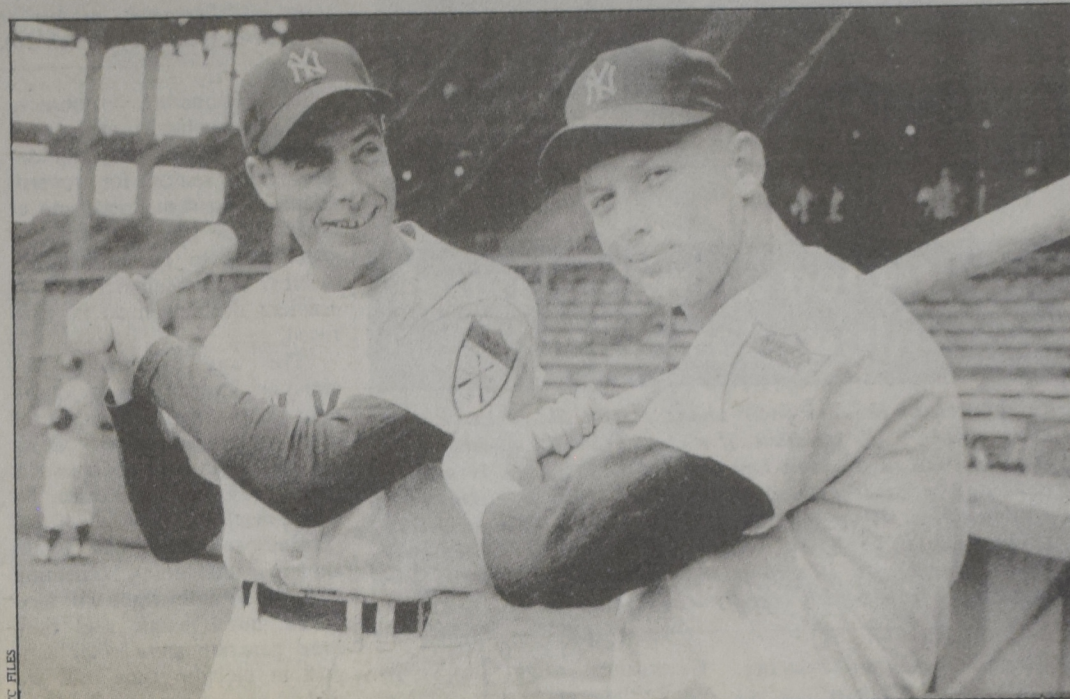
Is it that much different in our churches? Not everyone belongs behind the pulpit, in the consistory room or behind the organ (although I can play a pretty decent "Mary Had a Little Lamb"). Perhaps a stronger sense of community would be present in our churches if we all had a more concrete idea of the gifts that are ours and encouraged others to grow in the gifts that are theirs.

I hate this whole business of cutting girls off the basketball team. It doesn't sit right. Crushing kids' spirits isn't my thing. In fact, starting next season, our school has decided to change the whole system. Still, the whole dilemma has raised some important questions that go beyond 11-year-olds and basketball.

How do we encourage others to develop their talents while helping them understand what those talents are? How do we show each other that we are all blessed in different ways, without causing division and resentment? It's a tough question for any Christian, not just for teachers.

Tim Antonides teaches Grade 5 and coaches basketball at Surrey Christian School, Surrey, B.C.

New baseball bats maple flavored, thanks to Ottawa carpenter



"Joltin' Joe" DiMaggio (l.) and Mickey Mantle: used only ash bats.

Marian Van Til

TORONTO — Canada is literally moving into the major leagues with the production of a baseball bat that outlasts current bats used, reports *The Globe and Mail*.

When baseball began in the 19th century, bats were heavier and thicker, and often made of hickory. But gradually ash became the wood of choice, and the only choice. The theory was that because ash is lighter, it would help the player generate bat speed and thus give him a better chance of hitting the ball. But ash bats chip and often splinter if the ball isn't hit just right. On average, in the hands of a major leaguer an ash bat lasts about a day.

Sam Holman, a carpenter from Ottawa, thinks players would be better off using his bats fashioned of Quebec maple. He says maple is heavier and more dense than ash, and has a tighter grain. And he insists that sweet sound of the ball cracking off the bat is even "sharper, crisper, sweeter" with his maple bats. Holman asserts that his bats last at least a month.

Needed something to do

Holman began making the bats two years ago after he injured his knees and could no longer do the heavy carpentry required of his job as a set builder at the National Arts Centre.

One day in April last year Holman brought some of his bats to Skydome for the Blue Jays to sample during batting practice. Joe Carter, Carlos Delgado and Ed Sprague tried them out. Though the maple bat was not officially sanctioned, Carter liked it so much that he used one in a game against the Royals in Kansas City, and, coincidence or not, hit a home run. (Other players caution that, while a good bat helps, the bat doesn't make the hitter.)

Endorsement by stars

Carter has taken the bats with him to Baltimore, where he now plays for the Orioles, and has also gotten teammates Cal Ripken Jr., Craig Biggio, Jose Canseco, Jose Cruz Jr., Marty Cordova, Orlando Merced and Brad Ausmus interested in the bat.

At the end of last month, Holman was finally able to get the baseball commissioner's office to approve the maple bat. Carter's endorsement went a

long way towards the granting of that approval, and Holman is now supplying about 20 teams with his bats.

It takes about half an hour to fashion each bat, says Holman, and the maple bats cost a good deal more than ash ones: \$43 (US), as opposed to \$25. If or when there's more demand, Holman will do what's necessary to increase production, he says.

The company that makes the bat used by most major leaguers, the Louisville Slugger, says it doesn't plan to begin making its bats of maple. However, competition from Holman's Original Maple Bat Co. could change that in the not too distant future.

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Calendar of
Events,
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page 19



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Church press quotes



Rev. Jacob Kuntz

Protected against sexual abuse lawsuits?

Coupled with the sad facts about sexual abuse in church communities is the question: if a church and its members are sued in case such abuse has taken place, is there insurance coverage to protect the congregation? And are insurance companies willing to insure churches? In Faith Today (March/April 1998) we learn that it is of the foremost importance that a church is incorporated. Here are a few paragraphs from a fairly lengthy article:

"Many Protestant churches, particularly in Ontario, are not incorporated. Carter [a lawyer from Orangeville, Ont.] thinks these churches fail to realize the risks they run. In a number of American cases, courts have ruled that the members of an unincorporated church may be sued individually. Carter believes it's only a matter of time before the trend reaches Canada.

"Even if churches are incorporated, they are finding it increasingly difficult to obtain insurance against sexual abuse claims. Very few of the 180 property and casualty insurance companies in Canada will now protect churches from such claims. Toronto-based Ecclesiastical Insurance, for example, 40 per cent of whose business is from churches, has significantly reduced the scope of protection it provides.

"Royal and General Accident, two of Canada's largest insurers, have also cut back the coverage they offer to churches. Many churches, however, do not realize that they no longer have the same level of insurance protection if they have any at all.

"Insurance companies try to limit or eliminate liability for sexual misconduct in several ways. They might drop such coverage from the policy altogether. In that case, coverage might be purchased under a special high-risk policy with correspondingly high premiums. Insurers might also reduce the dollar amount of coverage for legal defence or for settlements.

Or insurers might simply increase the number of restrictions in the policy for what it will pay.

"Part of the reason insurance companies are more reluctant to offer sexual abuse insurance is that the cost can be high even if a claim is baseless. Even if 95 per cent of sexual abuse claims filed were groundless, the insurance company would still have to spend money to defend the policy holder, says broker Ken Hall.

"This shift in court rulings also makes insurance companies reluctant to provide coverage. Another reason for the reluctance is the apparently growing number of claims being filed, which insurances hear about through the media. The fear of a 'bottomless pit' of claims, as Carter puts it, has insurers running for cover.

"To help, Carter has written a checklist, available from the Canadian council of Christian Charities, entitled 'Ten Essential Steps to Protect Churches and Christian Ministries.' Incorporating the church is one of the first steps. Carter advises churches to separately incorporate high-risk ministries, such as special counselling ministries and children's programs.

"The litigation lawyers are now looking at evangelical Protestant churches more than they have in the past. It's just a matter of time before sexual abuse lawsuits will start to happen with Protestant churches."

Morality and democracy

Dr. John Redekop has noted that Canadians have "a deep-seated commitment to democracy" (see his "Personal Opinion" in the Mennonite Brethren Herald of March 20).

But he is not so sure that "the decision made by a large number of fallen human beings will generally turn out to be wise and good":

"It's fascinating to observe how evangelical anabaptists sometimes invoke majority desires as a reason for governments to do something, and at other times urge governments specifically to ignore majority desires. More than a few government officials must be confused.

"The way to remedy this situation, I suggest, is for Christians not to rest the argument for moral causes on majority views but on the ethical standards of a higher law, one laid down by God himself.

"One can point out in certain situations that doing something which is morally right will also please most people and may even generate more voter support at election time, but we should not let our case rise and fall on the vicissitudes of public opinion. History has much to teach us in this matter. Socrates died because of that. Galileo suffered as a result of it. Most

importantly, Jesus was the victim of injustice based on majority rule.

"Given the Christian view of fallen human nature, such outcomes should not surprise us....

"A related matter should be noted at this point. At times, the faulty judgments of the majority derive not from their morally fallen human condition, but from inadequate understanding.

"Concerning many questions, it takes time for the majority to understand reality. Insights don't normally come to majorities spontaneously. History illustrates this fact with reference to the ending of slavery, the rejection of racism, the acceptance of women as equals with men, the need to manage the environment carefully and much else.

"In the larger society, it is even more likely that the majority might make the wrong moral decision. So what is the solution? The public should have the power to elect deci-

sion-makers (politicians) and then later pass judgment on their performance. The public thus defers to the experts, or at least to those who can devote full-time governing. We call that deferential democracy. The public can also vote directly on various non-crucial questions but not on heavy political and financial matters.

"Those who advocate populist democracy (in which the populace decides as many issues as possible by referendum) encounter not only huge difficulties in ascertaining what the public really wants, but also must face the fact that a largely fallen society frequently will opt for the lesser good as God sees it. For thoughtful citizens, and especially for Christians, including politicians, this reality should be cause for pause. Morality must, after all, take precedence over democracy."

More questions than answers

We remember the Morrison-Mills case about the Halifax doctor who injected Mr. Mills with a lethal drug, not to end his life but to end his awful suffering. A judge discharged Morrison, stating there was insufficient evidence to bring the doctor to trial.

The Anglican Journal (April '98) states that this case "has nothing to do with euthanasia or doctor-assisted suicide. But neither does it have

to do with murder."

The Catholic Register (March 16) judges differently. In an editorial "Nothing is clearer" it agrees that Morrison "was not engaged in physician-assisted suicide and that it was not a case of euthanasia. Yet, in spite of her good intentions, "that doesn't make what she did, right."

In the Anglican Journal we read:

"... Dr. Morrison still faces discipline by her self-governed medical bodies. She could lose her license to practise medicine, although that would be no more constructive than pursuing criminal charges. She is no threat to society and even if she had hastened Mr. Mills' death — which on the evidence it now seems highly unlikely she did — it was by a couple of hours at most.

"The worst she can be accused of is an error in judgment, the real impact of which, had it worked, would have been less than the worst error some other physician makes almost any day in any hospital in this country.

"The Morrison-Mills case raises far more questions than have been asked or answered. Punishing Nancy Morrison fur-

ther is a waste of taxpayers' money and the talents Dr. Morrison has to offer. It's not about standing on principles on either side. It's about our humanity, about how we live and die together. It's about the grey areas of life which, no matter how hard we try to pretend otherwise, far outweigh the black and white areas."

The Catholic Register says:

"We hope the crown attorney concludes otherwise and appeals this alarming decision to a higher court. It sends out exactly the wrong message: that doctors can now expect Canadian courts to dismiss such cases with a legal nod and a wink. Already the legal experts are jumping on the decision to muddy the line between a death caused through

attempts to alleviate suffering with painkillers and plain mercy killing.

"Canadians should be shocked at the way the euthanasia debate has fallen into debates over means and degrees and has lost touch with what exactly is going on: people are being killed by or with the help of doctors, the most respected professionals in the land, who are sworn to fight for the life of their patients."

"We cannot allow the country to sleepwalk towards accepting such attacks on the sacredness of human life, under any guise. We must not."

Jacob Kuntz is a retired pastor of the Christian Reformed Church who lives in Brampton, Ont.

MAY 1, 1998

Classifieds

Classified Rates	Thank You	Birthdays	Anniversaries
<p>(Revised February 1, 1995)</p> <p>Births \$25.00</p> <p>Marriages & Engagements \$40.00</p> <p>Anniversaries \$45.00</p> <p>2-column anniversaries . \$90.00</p> <p>Obituaries \$45.00</p> <p>Notes of thanks \$35.00</p> <p>Birthdays \$40.00</p> <p>All other one-column classified advertisements: \$15.00 per column inch. NOTE: Minimum fee is \$15.00. Letter under file number \$35.00 extra. Photos: \$25.00 additional charge.</p> <p>Note: All rates shown above are GST inclusive</p> <p>ATTENTION!</p> <p>a) <i>Christian Courier</i> reserves the right to print classifieds using our usual format.</p> <p>b) A sheet with information about an obituary sent by funeral homes is not acceptable since it leads to errors and confusion.</p> <p>c) Photographs sent by fax are not acceptable. If you wish a photo included, send us the original.</p> <p>d) <i>Christian Courier</i> will not be responsible for any errors due to handwritten or phoned-in advertisements.</p> <p>e) The rate shown above for classifieds covers any length up to five column inches. <i>Christian Courier</i> reserves the right to charge for additional column inches at the rate of \$15.00 per column inch (GST incl.).</p> <p>NEWLYWEDS & NEW PARENTS</p> <p>We offer a one-year subscription for only \$25.00 (GST incl.) to the couples whose wedding is announced in the <i>Christian Courier</i> and to the parents of the child whose birth announcement appears in our paper. To facilitate matters, we encourage those who request the wedding or birth announcement to enclose \$25.00 and the couple's correct address.</p> <p>Christian Courier 4-261 Martindale Rd. St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1 Phone: (905) 682-8311 Fax: (905) 682-8313</p> <p>E-mail: ccadverts@aol.com</p>	<p>DE GROOT: We were again reminded what a privilege it is to belong to a Christian community. Thanks so much for the cards and well wishes with our 55th wedding anniversary. John and Atty De Groot, 1458 Hunt St., Samia, ON N7S 3M7</p> <p>DRENTH: With thankfulness to Him who makes all things possible, we wish to express our appreciation to our family and friends for all the cards, visits and best wishes sent on the occasion of our 60th wedding anniversary. "Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good: His love endures forever" (Ps. 106:1). Jerry and Mary Drenth.</p>	<p>BOUMA: Franecker, Fr. Kingston the Neth. Ont. 1913 May 13 1998</p> <p>JOHN BOUMA Our Lord is graciously granting us the privilege of celebrating our father's, (heit), and grandfather's (pake) 85th birthday. We are thankful for all our heit has been for our family and we lovingly wish him God's continuing care and blessings. Happy birthday and best wishes from your children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Liz & Dick Van Rooyen — Forest, Ont. Bev & Rick Wallace (Ryan, Brianne), Rick & Barb Van Rooyen (Cassandra, Miranda, Brent), Jason & Maria Van Rooyen Dirk & Sylvia Bouma — Kingston, Ont. David Bouma & Anita (fiancee), Juanita, Leisha, Andrea Andy & Jenny Bouma — Woodstock, Ont. Sarah & Matt Mosser, Mark Bouma, Kristen, Ryan and Chad Bouma The family wishes to invite friends and neighbors to an open house reception on Saturday, May 16, 1998, from 3-5 p.m., at the Dutch Heritage Apartment building, Kingston, Ont. Home address: 480 Elliott Ave., Apt. 102, Kingston, ON K7K 6J9</p> <p>BRUS: On Sunday, May 3, 1998, our mother</p> <p>MRS. ALEIDA BRUS (nee VAN ARRAGON) will celebrate her 90th birthday. We thank God for all these years given her and pray that He will bless mom and continue to keep her in His care. Her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Mom's address is: Shalom Manor, 12 Bartlett Ave., Grimsby, ON L3M 4N5</p>	 <p>Dear Darling,</p> <p><i>Through many years you have stood by me, cared for me, brought me joy, helped mold me, and have done all the things that say, "I love you for who and what you are." You always are fun, make me laugh, and on the darker days of life make the sun shine through. Always happy, you forever have some song or Dutch psalm on your lips — extraordinarily fond of fruit and veggies, you kept your figure, and are prettier now than ever: you still turn me on! It was God's goodness that brought you into my life, the woman of Proverbs 31:10-31. And as this month it will be 45 years ago that you said "Yes" to me, I want to say once again, also in this way, "Thank you so much, sweetheart, for who you are. I love you billions!"</i></p> <p>Me.</p>
	<p>Marriages</p> <p>STOLTE/KAMPHOF: With gratefulness to God in bringing us together we, ERIC KAMPHOF and KAREN STOLTE are pleased to announce our wedding day on May 16, 1998, 2 p.m., at Inglewood Chr. Ref. Church, Edmonton, Alta. Address: #207, 10030-86 Ave., Edmonton, AB T6E 2L9</p>		<p>Anniversaries</p> <p>Zwagerveen Whitby the Neth. Ont. 1948 May 13 1998 Congratulations to our parents and grandparents</p> <p>GEERT and LUTSKE VAN DER PLOEG - DE GRAAF on their 50th wedding anniversary. From their children and grandchildren: Florence & Peter Jesshope and family Danny & Shirley Van der Ploeg and family Jerry & Janet Van der Ploeg and family Dirk & Malissa Van der Ploeg and family Frank Van der Ploeg Jane & Jim Deagle and family Mary & Brian Flaherty We wish you many more years in good health. Psalm 23. Open house on Saturday, May 9, 1998, from 2-4 p.m., at 100 Glen Hill Dr. S., 10th floor, Whitby, Ont. Home address: 100 Glen Hill Dr. S., Apt. 700, Whitby, ON L1N 8R4</p>
	<p>Births</p> <p>DEVRIES/VAN DUYNENVOORDE: With thanks to our Lord, Jeremy and Karen are overjoyed to announce the birth of a healthy son COREY JAMES on Monday, April 13, 1998, weighing 7 lbs., 12 oz. Corey has a proud sister, Melissa, and a brother, Dylan. He is the sixth grandchild for Peter and Jane Van Duijvenvoorde and fourth for John and Madeline Devries. A great-grandson for Mrs. Jackie Van Duijvenvoorde, Shalom Manor, Grimsby, Ont., Mrs. Margaret Veld, Welland, Ont., and Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Devries, Smithville, Ont. Home address: 971 Boyle Road, Fenwick, ON L0S 1C0</p>	<p>Vacation</p> <p>Luxury Collingwood Condominium 2 bdrm., sleeps 7, fully equipped, TV, VCR, stereo, dishwasher, fireplace, A/C. Swimming, cycling, hiking, tennis, golf and more! \$600/wk, \$300/wkend. Call (905) 877-0408. (No smoking, no pets).</p>	<p>Franecker Cobourg Fr., the Neth. Ont. 1948 May 5 1998 "Thy word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" (Ps. 119:105). It is with joy and thanksgiving that we are able to celebrate the 50th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents JOHN and JENNY SCHOON (nee BERGSMA) We hope and pray that you will enjoy many more years together. Love and congratulations from your family. Joyce & Peter McBride — Toronto, Ont. Karen, Jonathan Teena & Bob Druce — Peterborough, Ont. Jennifer Jack & Cathi Schoon — Oshawa, Ont. Devon, Phillip Dick & Kim Schoon — Port Hope, Ont. Rachel, Erin Alice & Matt Holleman — Windsor, N.S. Amy, Mark, Vicki, Lucas Peter Schoon — Port Hope, Ont. Keifer An open house will be held on May 2, 1998, from 2-4 p.m., in Grace Chr. Ref. Church, 440 King St., Cobourg, Ont. Home address: 323 Tweed St., Cobourg, ON K9A 2R8</p>
<p>Miscellaneous</p> <p>CLINTON, ONTARIO ADULT LIFE LEASE RESIDENCES available 936 sq.ft. to 1235 sq.ft. Fully wheelchair accessible, sprinkler system, central air, security throughout building. Dutch and English spoken. For more info. call (519) 233-7296 or (519) 482-7862.</p>	<p>For Rent</p> <p>COTTAGE IN HOLTEN in scenic Holten (Holland). Contact: Andy Borger (905) 623-6049</p>	<p>Personal</p> <p>ONE TO ANOTHER Christian companion magazine. Hundreds of readers Canada-wide. Single issue \$5. Write to: #12 923 2nd Ave. S. Lethbridge, AB T1J 0C7</p>	

Classifieds

Anniversaries	Obituaries	Obituaries	Obituaries	Anniversaries
<p>Duncan, B.C. Leduc, Alta. 1958 May 9 1998 With joy and thanksgiving to God, we hope to celebrate with our parents HANK and HENNY GROENEWOLD (RENEA) the occasion of their 40th wedding anniversary. Congratulations Mom and Dad, Grandma and Grandpa! We are grateful for your love and support throughout our lives and we wish you many more years together! Evan & Susan Schuurman — Leduc, Alta. Laura, Jeana, Jordan, Michelle, Mariah Ralph & Joyce Leyenhorst — Armstrong, B.C. Ryan, Heidi, Carolyn Roger & Janette Groenewold — Abbotsford, B.C. Address: R.R. #2, Leduc, AB T9E 2X2</p>	<p><i>I will sing of my Redeemer... forever.</i> On April 20, 1998, the Lord took to himself JELLE ZYLSTRA in his 83rd year. Dearly loved husband of the late Machteltje Zylstra (nee Rademaker), d. Aug. 16, 1993. Dear father, grandfather and great- grandfather of: Henry & Cathy Zuidema Carina & Dariel, Brendan & Valerie (Hannah), Matthew & Liza, Timothy & Sandra, Jason Auke & Frances Zylstra Michael, Adam, Joshua, Sarah John & Jacomina Winter Jeff & Jacquie, Janelle, Eric & Jessica, Kevin & Dione (Michael, Tyler), Curt & Heidi (Sandra) Bill & Linda Zylstra Marcy, Zahra, Billy John & Margaret Seldentuis Warren, Daniel & Tammy (engaged), Dayna Lypje Zylstra Ilyas, Ibrahim Frances Zylstra Jennifer, Seth, Chris, Jason, Jeffrey, Paul Gary & Susan Zylstra Tammy & Steve, Tommy, David, Gary, Gabriel, Megan Minke Leendertse Erica, Heather, Jolene Reina Zylstra Alicia Jelle & Sandra Zylstra Leanna, Bradley, Steven Bert & Cora VandeBeek Maria, Kevin, Andre, April Marius & Christena Zylstra Richard, Sonya, Mark, Brian, Janine Michael & Janet Warnock Carly, Bronson Bryan & Gaye Zylstra Justin, Darryl, Tyler Predeceased by son Wybe (1991) and granddaughter Laura (1990). "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever" (Ps.23:6). Correspondence address: Minke Leendertse, 1285 Colborne St. W., Brantford, ON N3T 5L7</p>	<p>Diever Brantford the Neth. Ont. Aug. 16, 1914 - April 4, 1998 On April 4, 1998, after a brief illness, the Lord called home our beloved mother, grandmother and great- grandmother GRACE WIERSMA (nee MULDER) We thank God for her strong faith and the inspiration that she has been to all of us. Predeceased by her husband Paul in 1995. Dear mother of: John & Louise Wiersma — Pickering, Ont. Paul & BethAnn, Amanda & Marten, Ed & Karen, Rob Harry & Thea Wiersma — Ancaster, Ont. Jennifer & Rob (Jessica, Jordan, Justin), Elaine, MaryAnn, Christina Henry & Dianne Wiersma — Beamsville, Ont. Steve & Belinda, Sandra, Jeff, Laurie Jerry & Barb Wiersma — St. George, Ont. Julie, Rick, Matt, Jenny The funeral service was held at Bethel Reformed Church in Brantford, Ont., Pastor Tom Van- derschaaf and Elder Al Nyp offici- ating. Correspondence address: John Wiersma, 1014 Mountcastle Cr., Pickering, ON L1V 5J2</p>	<p>Rozenburg Cayuga 1912 1998 ARY (HARRY) VANDERKOOY "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Yes," says the Spirit, "they will rest from their labor, for their deeds will follow them." (Rev.14:13). Harry passed away peacefully, at home, after a long illness on April 7, 1998. He was in his 87th year. Dear husband of Marie VanderKooy (nee VanderKnaap). Beloved father and Opa of: Tena Postma — Niagara Falls, Ont. Michele & Todd, Tony & Denise (Wesley) Nellie & Peter deHaan — Smithville, Ont. Lisa & Jeff (Joshua, Marissa, Hope), Steven & Claudia deHaan (Jason), Heather & David Evelyn & Jack Dam — Vineland, Ont. Stephanie, Martin, Jonathan Joyce & Charles Fisher — Caledonia, Ont. Tena & John, Joseph, Jan-Marie, Audrey John & Marlene VanderKooy — Cayuga, Ont. Todd, Ryan, Emilie Kathleen & Herman VanderLeest — Surrey, B.C. Aaron, Dana, Bryan, Andrea, Adrian, Nadina Ben & Femmy Walpot — Cayuga, Ont. Bernadine & Huey (Tristen), Conrad & Karen Brother of: Janette Groenewegen, Brantford, Ont., William & Rita VanderKooy, Grimsby, Ont., Trudy & Gerrit Klootwyk, Abbotsford, B.C., Jaap VanderKooy, Annie & Cors Voogt, Pie & Ary Groenewegen, all of the Netherlands. Brother-in-law of: Leens Langen- doen, Fija & Jo Bergewerff, Krijns Voorberg, and Joke VanderKnaap, all of the Netherlands. Harry was a founding member of the York Chr. Ref. Church, and a Chartered Member of the Gideon Camp. Visiting was held at the Miller Funeral Chapel in Cayuga, Inter- ment Riverside Cemetery. A Memorial Service was held at the York Chr. Ref. Church, on April 11, 1998. Mary VanderKooy still resides at: 1 Mohawk St. W., Box 243, Cayuga, ON N0A 1E0 "For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whosoever shall believe in Him shall not perish but have eternal life."</p>	<p> Friesland Russell the Neth. Ont. 1958 May 8 1998 "And surely I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matt.28:20). With great joy we announce the 40th wedding anniversary of our parents, GERLOF and BAUKJE BAKKER (nee KOOPMAN) Congratulations Pake and Beppe! Wilma Bakker & Larry Lutgendorff — Kingston John, Jennifer Dennis Bakker — Waterloo Bill & Brenda Bakker — Russell Brittany, Kaitlyn Anita & Don Herweyer — Nepean Rebecca, Darren Sylvia Bakker & Joey Richardson — Shawville, Que. We invite family and friends to join us at an open house on Saturday, May 9, 1998, from 2-5 p.m., in the Russell Curling Club. Best wishes only. Home address: 591 Eadie Road, Russell, ON K4R 1E5</p>
<p>Dedemsvaart, Ov. Brampton the Neth. Ont. 1933 May 5 1998 With thankfulness in our hearts to God we share with you the news that our parents HERMAN STORTEBOOM and HENNY STORTEBOOM (nee BEUMER) will celebrate their 65th anniversary. Joan & Phillip De Gans — Ripley, Ont. Klaas & Alice Storteboom — Orangeville, Ont. Gertie & Henk Nyhoff — Minising, Ont. Ralph & Vivian Storteboom — Tiverton, Ont. grandchildren and great-grand- children. Home address: 7900 McLaughlin Road, TT #516, Brampton, ON L6Y 5A7</p>				<p>Teachers OTTAWA, Ont.: Ottawa Chr. School is interested in applications from a committed Christian for a part-time French position. This is to commence Sept. 1998. We have a school of 180 students from Junior Kindergarten to Grade 8. Please submit your resume to: Mrs. Henni Helleman, Principal, Ottawa Chr. School, 2191 Benjamin Ave., Ottawa, ON K2A 1P6 or fax to (613) 722-5836</p>
<p>Drachten Emo the Neth. Ont. 1938 May 19 1998 We rejoice and give thanks to the Lord for His faithfulness shown to our parents, grandparents and great-grandparents as they celebrate their 60th anniversary LOURENS and TRIJNTJE (TINA) VISSER (nee WIERINGSMA) We pray the Lord will continue to bless them and keep them in His loving care. With love from your children, grandchildren and great- grandchild: Richard & Metta Visser — Emo, Ont. Melanie, Anthony John & Liz Visser — Surrey, B.C. Roy, Neil Syd & Joyce Visser — Delta, B.C. Alex, Gina Sam & Marlene Visser — Emo, Ont. Brenda & Tony (Jaryd), Charlene Meine & Cathy Visser — Worth, Ill. Lauren, Siebum, Tina, Brian, Linnea & Craig Home address: Box 67, Emo, ON POW 1E0</p>	<p>Employment Wanted Seeking co-op education placement. Deaf student in final year at Rochester Institute of Technology needs co-op term (June-Sept.) with company to complete credits for Diploma in Imaging Technol- ogy. This unpaid position is to give the 23-year-old male student practi- cal experience in graphic/photo production (any kind), Web page design, videos and photography, editing and captioning. Communi- cate by writing and/or American Sign Language. Has own LapTop. Contact Derek Jagt at (905) 823- 3020 or fax (416) 366-0601.</p>	<p>"Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God" (Ps.42:5b). March 30, 1924 - April 3, 1998 CORNELIS BRAAM Cornelis Braam was born in Lisse, the Netherlands. He was united in marriage to Bastiaantje Comelia (Jane) Vander Kwaak on Jan. 11, 1951. They immigrated to Terrace, B.C., in May of 1956. Cor was a professional house painter and much in demand because of his good workmanship. He loved gar- dening and was especially known for his tulips. He developed diabetes at an early age but persevered to live a normal life. He touched many lives with his caring, compassionate character. He will be sadly missed by his family and friends. Every aspect of Cor's life was touched by his deep and diligent love for God. He is survived by his loving wife, eight brothers and sisters, and his children: (Fred) & Jane Marshall (Peter) & Joanne Lubberts (John) & Hilde VandeVelde Bill & (Florence) Braam Clarence & (Cheryl) Braam Rick & (Sarah) Braam and 22 grandchildren. Correspondence address: Jane Braam, 5009 Lanfear Dr., Terrace, BC V8G 3H7</p>	<p>Job Opportunities Full-time position available on large produce farm. Knowledge of handling machinery and tractors es- sential. Qualified applicant could start immediately. Send resume and references to: Boot's Farm Inc. R.R. #2, Scotland, ON N0E 1R0 Fax or call: (519) 446-3233 No Sunday calls.</p>	<p>BE EARLY! Please make sure we have classified ads (especially anniversary ads) on our desk at least 10 days before the issue date. Last minute ads are difficult - if not impossible - to place in the right spot or to place at all in the desired issue. Sometimes a late sub- mission causes disappoint- ment on your part when the issue arrives after your special event. Please note all the "No Issue" weeks on page 5.</p>

Classifieds

Teachers

CHATHAM, Ont.: Chatham Chr. High School invites applications for **possible openings** in a combination of at least two of the following areas: math, computer, science, art and phys. ed.

Please send applications to:

Mr. John Van Pelt, Principal
90 Park Ave. E.
Chatham, ON N7M 3V4
Phone: (519) 352-4591
Fax: (519) 352-3476

WELLANDPORT, Ont.: Wellandport Chr. School invites applications for the following openings for the 1998-99 school year.

Part-time position in the junior grades (5 afternoons per week).
Full-time position in the junior grades.

Send resume to:

Wellandport Chr. School
R.R. 1, Wellandport, ON L0R 2J0
Attention: Mr. W. Thies, Principal
Deadline: May 8, 1998.

Miscellaneous

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Job Opportunities

SECONDARY PRINCIPAL

Mount Vernon, Washington

Mount Vernon Christian School, a 400-student K-12 school located in picturesque Skagit Valley near the Pacific coast about midway between Seattle and Vancouver, B.C., has an opening for the position of **Secondary Principal** for the 1998-1999 school year. The Secondary Principal leads the educational program of our Middle School (Grade 6-8, about 100 students), and our High School (Gr. 9-12, about 100 students). The Secondary Principal is a member of an administrative team which also includes the Elementary Principal/Superintendent, the School Counsellor, and the Director of Community Development. Part-time teaching may be included in the assignment. We will consider revising the assignments of the administrative team members to accommodate a well-qualified candidate. Inquiries or applications may be directed to:

Dr. Ray Klapwyk, Elementary Principal/Superintendent,
Mount Vernon Christian School, 820 W. Blackburn
Road, Mt. Vernon, WA 98273; Phone: (360) 424-9157;
Fax: (360) 424-9256.

Oakville Christian School

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Applications should include a complete resume, a covering letter incorporating applicant's philosophy of Christian Education, and two references. Mail to:

Search Committee
c/o Oakville Christian School
112 Third Line, Oakville, ON L6L 3Z6
Tel.: (905) 825-1909 or Fax: (905) 825-3398



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Miscellaneous

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Resumes or requests for more information may be directed to:
Youth Worker Search Committee

Mr. Art Niezen
3 Grist Mill Road, Holland Landing, ON L9N 1B9
Voicemail: (905) 727-0022, ext. 2431
Fax: (905) 895-0894; E-mail: niezena@yrbe.edu.on.ca

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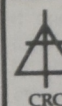
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Send \$5.95, plus \$1.50 for mailing, to **Rev. W.H. Moody**,
413-3097 Palmer Drive,
Burlington, ON L7M 4G8

Classifieds

Teachers	Job Opportunities	Miscellaneous
<p>CLINTON, Ont.: Clinton and District Chr. School, currently presenting Christian education to 232 students - grades K-8, invites applications for an opening (75%) in the Resource position, effective September 1998. Experience or certification in the area of Special Education would be an asset. Interested applicants should submit a letter of application, resume, college transcripts, personal philosophy of education and references no later than Friday, May 15, 1998, to:</p> <p>Clarence Bos, Principal Clinton and District Chr. School Box 658, Clinton, ON N0M 1L0 Phone: (519) 482-7851 Fax: (519) 482-7448</p>	<p>Pacific Christian Secondary School Victoria, B.C.</p> <p>Teachers still required for the 1998/99 school year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * French (possible Sec./Elem. combination) * Art and Home Economics * Girls' Physical Education * Industrial Education * Girls' Counsellor * Band/Choir <p>Teachers must be committed Christians and certifiable by the B.C. College of Teachers.</p> <p>Send letter of application, resume and statement of faith to:</p> <p>John Messelink, Secondary Principal Pacific Christian School 654 Agnes Street Victoria, BC V8Z 2E6 Phone: (250) 479-4532 Fax: (250) 479-3511</p>	<p>ICS The Institute for Christian Studies</p> <p>Wycliffe College</p> <p>JULY 13 - 31, 1998 Summer School</p> <p>For more information contact John Franklin: Email: franklin@ultratech.net Phone: (416) 979-2331 ext. 241 Toll-free: 1-888-326-5347</p> <p>COURSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ When Women Read the Old Testament, JULY 13 - 24 ■ Beyond Homelessness: Theology in a Postmodern World, JULY 13 - 24 ■ The Letter to the Colossians, JULY 13 - 24 ■ Thinking About God, JULY 20 - 31 <p>WORKSHOPS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The Pilgrimage of Bruce Cockburn, JULY 17 - 18 ■ Proclaiming Jubilee: Pipe-dream or Audacious Hope? JULY 25
<p>FT. McMURRAY, Alta.: Ft. McMurray Christian School needs a teacher for Grade 7/8 and part-time administration for Sept. 1998. Knowledge of CTS, computers, P.E. an asset. We also need a teacher for Grade 5/6. Knowledge of music, French, learning resource an asset. Please address resume to:</p> <p>Mrs. Saxon Morgan Ft. McMurray Chr. School 101 Tundra Dr. Ft. McMurray, AB T9H 5A4 Phone: (403) 743-1079</p>	<p>Attention!</p> <p>If you are considering sending us an ad via fax, please be sure to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • send printed or typed copy • include billing address • include contact person with phonenumber <p>Thank you.</p>	<p>Hollandse Dag, Moorefield, Ont.</p> <p><i>De negenentwintigste Hollandse Dag wordt gehouden</i> Woensdag, 10 juni 1998 om 10 uur <i>in de</i> Moorefield Community Centre</p> <p><i>Samenzang, voordrachten, muziek, enz.</i> Spreeker: Ds. L. Schaafsma van Springford, Ont. <i>Lunch meenemen en uw eigen koffiekop.</i> <i>Gratis koffie en koek.</i></p> <p><i>Voor gezelligheid and plezierig uitgaan, moet je de Hollandse Dag niet overslaan.</i></p>
<p>GEORGETOWN, Ont.: Georgetown District Chr. School is in need of a Kindergarten teacher for a maternity leave position, from Sept. 1998 to March Break 1999. If you would like to teach approx. 20 students on Mon., Wed., and Fri. in a great facility with a dynamic team, please send your resume to:</p> <p>Mrs. Treena Sybersma, Principal R.R. 1, Georgetown, ON L7G 4S4 Phone: (905) 877-4221 or Fax: (905) 877-1483</p> <p>Only those candidates who are granted an interview will be contacted.</p>	<p>Events</p>	<p>REDEEMER COLLEGE</p> <p>Redeemer College Spring Appeal</p> <p>Redeemer is Ontario's own Christian, liberal arts and science university. This year our goal is to see more students benefit from an education at Redeemer. Your support will have a significant impact in the lives of our students.</p> <p>Please support Redeemer's Spring Appeal by sending your gift with the form below. All donations will be receipted. Thank you!</p> <p>Redeemer College Response Form</p> <p>Yes, I/we would like to help Redeemer move their enrolment to 500 students. Here is my/our gift of:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$100 <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 <input type="checkbox"/> other \$ _____</p> <p>Name: _____ Address: _____ City: _____ Prov. _____ Postal Code: _____</p> <p>Redeemer College - 777 Garner Rd. E. Ancaster, ON L9K 1J4 (905) 648-2131-www.redeemer.on.ca (CC)</p>
<p>VERNON, B.C.: The Vernon Chr. School is seeking the services of a teacher at the Middle School level for the fall of 1998. We are specifically looking for expertise in the area of PE and Computer Education. This position requires someone who enjoys working in a team situation and is a well-organized self-starter. Vernon Chr. School is a parent-operated school, serving a diverse Christian community in the sunny Okanagan Valley of British Columbia. Send resumes to:</p> <p>Mr. Larry Simpson, Principal Vernon Christian School 6890 Pleasant Valley Road Vernon, BC V1B 3R5</p>	<p>LITTLE EUROPE RESORT and TRAILER PARK</p> <p>Bracebridge, Muskoka</p> <p>Plan a successful vacation at our resort known for its Dutch hospitality. Reasonable rates for cottage rentals. Excellent for camping, swimming and fishing (ideal for group camping). "Little Europe" is located 10 km. east of Hwy. 11, on Hwy. 118 East, past the Muskoka Airport.</p> <p>• No pets please • Showers available Roel & Riet Bakema Little Europe Resort, R.R. 3, Bracebridge, ON P1L 1X1 Phone: (705) 645-2738</p>	<p>Why not take advantage of our Calendar of Events for your next event?</p>

Classifieds

Events	Miscellaneous	Events
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Community CRC - Kitchener

(formerly First CRC of Kitchener)

50th Anniversary Celebration

June 27 and 28, 1998

All former members and friends are invited to celebrate with us.
Psalm 98

Saturday, June 27:
5:00-7:00 p.m. Strawberry social/7:30 p.m. Variety Program

Sunday June 28:
10:00 a.m. Service of Celebration

Community Chr. Ref. Church
1275 Bleams Road, Kitchener, ON N2G 3W5
Church Office: (519) 743-9482

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Calendar of Events

Please submit only brief items. Placement is subject to space availability. Lengthy, multiple-event announcements will be rejected. We reserve the right to edit the material and to charge a nominal, per issue fee per item inserted.

Apr. 28 - May 5 Redeemer College announces its Choral Concert Tour in British Columbia. **Apr. 28: Surrey; Apr. 30: Abbotsford; May 2: Lynden, WA; May 3: Victoria; May 5: New Westminster.** Info.: (905) 648-2131.

April 30 Fortieth anniversary dinner and celebration, 6:30 p.m., John Knox Chr. School Society, **Wyoming, Ont.** Info./tickets: (519) 845-3226 or 845-3129. (#)

May 2 Pastors & Deacons' Breakfast sponsored by Hamilton's Homestead Residential & Support Services, 8:15 - 10:30 a.m., Immanuel CRC, West 5th & Mohawk, **Hamilton, Ont.** Guest speaker: Dr. Tony Carr, who will speak on schizophrenia and depression and appropriate pastoral responses. Info.: Jantina De Vries at (905) 389-3510.

May 8 Thanksgiving Celebration Evening with Rev. & Mrs. Henry Wildeboer by Zion CRC, **Oshawa, Ont.** From 7-10 p.m., at Calvary Baptist Church, 300 Rossland Rd., E., **Oshawa, Ont.** Phone: (905) 436-3255. Fax: (905) 436-3691. (#)

to **May 9** The Redeemer College Theatre Arts Dept. presents Raymond Louter's play "Stranger in the Land." **Apr. 27, 28 - London, Ont.** (519) 672-8800; **Apr. 29 - St. Thomas, Ont.** (519) 672-9030; **May 1, 2 - Sarnia, Ont.** (519) 344-7469; **May 4, 5 - Blyth, Ont.** (519) 523-9300; **May 6 - Owen Sound, Ont.** (519) 371-2833; **May 7 - Lindsay, Ont.** (705) 324-9111; **May 8, 9 - Mississauga, Ont.** (905) 306-6100. Evening shows at 8 p.m. Matinee shows on **May 2 & 9 at 2 p.m.; May 5 at noon.** (#)

May 20 Organ recital by Jonathan Oldengarm, noon, Yorkminster Park Baptist Church, **Toronto, Ont.** Info.: (519) 338-3214.

May 22 - 24 "Caring for God's Creation," a conference on faith and the environmental professional, featuring Dr. Calvin DeWitt and Dr. Fred Van Dyke. At The King's University College, **Edmonton, Alta.** Info.: (403) 465-8304, fax (403) 465-3534. E-mail: jmathis@kingsu.ab.ca (#)

May 24 Dutch worship service led by Rev. Allan C. Groen, 3 p.m., Calvin CRC, 1475 Merivale Rd., **Nepean, Ont.** Also featuring several musicians and a male chorus. Info.: (613) 224-1328. (#)

May 28 40th Anniversary of the Bethel Chr.Ref. Church, **Dunnville, Ont.** Former members are welcome to attend the special thanksgiving worship service on **May 31, 1998.** Info.: (905) 774-7285. (#)

May 29-31 Singles Conference at Redeemer College, **Ancaster, Ont.** Theme: "Hope Set High." For info. and brochure call (905) 387-1628. (#)

May 31 Dutch worship service led by Rev. Harry A. Vander Windt, 3 p.m., CRC, **Ancaster, Ont.**

June 8-11 Eighth Annual 4-Day Evening Walk (Hikers' Festival), at the Royal Botanical Gardens, **Burlington, Ont.** Registration at RBG Centre each day at 4:30 p.m. For info. call Bill Haartman at (905) 383-6319.

June 10 "Hollandse Dag," 10 a.m., Community Centre, **Moorefield, Ont.** Info.: (519) 638-2053.

July 13 ICS/Wycliffe-sponsored Summer School, 229 College St., **Toronto, Ont.** For more info. contact John Franklin at (416) 979-2331. Toll free 1-888-326-5347. E-mail: franklin@ultratech.net

Sept. 25 Toronto District Chr. High School 35th Anniversary Celebration Dinner! All friends of TDCH are invited to attend this event at the school, **Woodbridge, Ont.** Tickets \$35, order through the school office beginning May 1, 1998. Tel. (905) 851-1772.

40th Anniversary

Calvary Chr. Ref. Church of Ottawa, Ont., will celebrate its 40th anniversary on **Saturday, June 6**, with a Bar-B-Q in the afternoon and a Down Memory Lane program in the evening at the church — **3782 Russell Rd., Gloucester, Ont.** On Sunday, June 7, at 10:00 a.m., there will be a special anniversary service. All former members are invited to come and celebrate with us.

For info. call (613) 821-1911.

Miscellaneous

Christy's Cove Summer Resort

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News

Don't hide light under bushel, urges outspoken justice worker

Aiden Schlichting Enns

WINNIPEG — Gerald Vandezande had strong words for Mennonites. He said they already do phenomenal things, but they need to "make public the injustices they encounter."

Vandezande spoke at a national peace consultation held the second weekend in March by Mennonite Central Committee and called "Toward a Vision for Peacemaking in Canada." With 35 years experience in public policy development, Vandezande is the national public affairs director for Citizens for Public Justice, based in Toronto.

"It's important that the good deeds and the good news go public," said Vandezande when asked in an interview what he thought of MCC focusing its peacemaking efforts at the level of the local congregation.

Work with congregations "is important if it leads to the

churches speaking out," he said. "You must not hide your light under a bushel — whether that's the light of compassion or justice. It must shine in the world so people know that there are alternatives."

The top priority for MCC at this point should be "to speak to the powers, on the basis of their community and world-wide ministry. Say: 'This is what's going on, and this is what needs correcting.'"

"Mennonites know very well that it is no use in engaging in band-aid ministry." They have to engage in structural healing, housing for the homeless and challenging governments, said Vandezande.

Evangelistic fervor

In his address, which lasted for almost two hours, Vandezande spoke biblical imperatives with the passion and

enthusiasm of an evangelist.

"You seem to exude optimism that governments can promote Christian virtues in Canada," said Robert J. Suderman in a question period. Suderman, who is executive director of the Resources Commission of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada, asked Vandezande what gives him hope to continue working at change with the government.

In response, Vandezande did not point to his significant success in influencing public policy, rather he pointed to the confidence he has through the "crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus." He said he enjoys his work. He sees himself living out the victory of the resurrection.

The system is not completely closed. "It's full of people.... People in government change their minds," he said.

Vandezande writes regularly

in numerous periodicals, including the *Catalyst*, the CPJ newsletter. He has also written the books, *Let Justice Flow*, and *Political Action in an Era of Budget Cuts*. He is scheduled to retire later this year.

MCC turns toward local scene

The "peace consultation" at which Vandezande spoke was an initial step in strengthening MCC's peace commitment, says Tom Snowdon, MCC Canada Peace Ministries co-ordinator.

MCC Canada's peace ministry role is changing, Snowdon explained at the consultation. What is emerging is a portfolio that will likely spend less time on the national stage in an activist role, and more time working with concerns, ideas and interests percolating among provincial MCCs and other constituent groups, he said.

Major Toronto hospital forbids abortions

CC Staff

TORONTO — St. Michael's, a Roman Catholic hospital in downtown Toronto, is facing strong differences of opinion as a result of its recent merger with nearby Wellesley Central Hospital. One result is the cancellation of abortions, and vasectomies scheduled to take place at Wellesley, reports the *Globe and Mail*.

the downtown Toronto area that do provide that service."

Condoms banned

That rule also applies to birth control procedures, such as vasectomies and most tubal ligations. As well, the hospital will no longer distribute condoms in waiting rooms and other public spaces.

One Toronto man, who last January scheduled a vasectomy for April 15, said he got a call this month from his urologist's office saying the doctor had been told to cancel such procedures. Now he must find a new doctor and wait several more months to have the operation.

"This isn't right," said the patient, who spoke on condition of anonymity. "I, as a taxpayer who pays substantial taxes and funds the medical system, am totally aghast that my public tax dollars are going to fund a hospital that discriminates and is imposing Catholic views on other people."

When a provincial body announced last summer that St. Michael's would take over Wellesley's programs, some criticized the Catholic hospital for its perceived inability to serve Wellesley's large number of patients with HIV or AIDS. Implications of the merger became apparent in early April, when a directive was issued in-

forming Wellesley doctors they were not to perform abortions or birth control procedures.

Officials with St. Mike's are in the process of informing Wellesley doctors of their policies and ensuring that Wellesley's programs are "in line with St. Mike's mission and values,"

said Fuchs. "In a perfect world, perhaps we may have been able to discuss these matters earlier with doctors, gave them a little more advance notice. But ... we've been as quick as we can in dealing with each program and beginning the communication process."

Abortion opponents suffer setback

CC Staff (with files from AP)

CHICAGO — In an unusual use of a racketeering law designed to fight organized crime, a U.S. federal jury ruled April 20 that anti-abortion protest organizers used threats and violence to shut down clinics — a verdict that could cost the movement millions.

Although the pro-life activists were ordered to pay about \$258,000 (US), the class-action ruling opened the door for more claims by as many as 1,000 abortion clinics across the U.S.

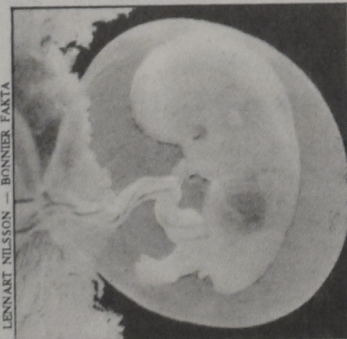
"This is the biggest courtroom defeat for the anti-abortion movement ever," declared Fay Clayton, a lawyer for the National Organization of Women (NOW), which filed the lawsuit in 1986.

The jury found that anti-abortion activist Joseph Scheidler

and two associates, Timothy Murphy and Andrew Scholberg, engaged in 21 acts of extortion to shut down abortion clinics. The jury also found that the Pro-Life Action League and Operation Rescue were part of the scheme.

The jury ordered the three activists and two groups to pay about \$86,000, which will be tripled under the racketeering law. The damages were awarded to abortion clinics in Milwaukee, Wis., and Wilmington, Del., for security measures required after violence flared outside their doors.

"They want to bankrupt us — there's no question about that," asserted Scheidler, who is executive director of the Pro-Life Action League. He denied that he and his co-defendants had encouraged violence.



A nine-week-old fetus.

Wellesley is now considered a division of the Roman Catholic hospital and procedures performed there must conform to St. Michael's policies, says spokesperson Anthony Fuchs. "Fortunately or unfortunately, there are some things that we do not provide. We would hope that a patient would feel comfortable coming to St. Michael's but if they're looking for an abortion, there are other hospitals within

News Digest

Ice hotel gets warm response

JUKKASJAEVI, Sweden (AP) — Like many high-class hotels, the one in Jukkasjaervi lends clothes to guests who are improperly dressed. But it's not a matter of style but survival: the hotel is made of snow and ice. Guests who mill around in the lobby of the Ishotellet — Ice Hotel — prefer snowsuits to Armani.

The hotel, now in its eighth year, has become an unlikely success story, drawing tens of thousands of people a year to this small hamlet 160 km north of the Arctic Circle. The one-storey hotel is built every December and lasts until sometime in May. This year's version has 29 bedrooms, a chapel and an art gallery.

Notes from wives needed

ALFORD, Scotland — Shopkeeper Allan Gordon is fed up with men coming back to his store to exchange paint because their wives hate the color. In response, reports Reuters, he has posted a new sign by his paint mixing machine saying, "We will not supply husbands with colored paint without a signed note from their wives." If nothing else, "men are thinking a bit harder about what they buy" says Gordon.

Asia's City of Cats

KUCHING, Malaysia (AP) — America has the City of Angels. Asia has a City of Cats.

Kuching's streets have almost no scruffy, stray felines. But the cityscape itself, which features 19th century Chinese temples, British colonial shops and new luxury hotels, is swarming with renditions of cats. Bronze cat sculptures perch next to the Sarawak River, and stone obelisks encircled by larger-than-life cat statues stand like shrines at major intersections.

The celebration of cats, both artistic and kitschy, is practically an obsession in this city on the northwestern coast of Borneo. "Every place has a mascot — this is ours," says Bahtir Haji Affandi, curator of a local museum devoted solely to the role of cats in world society.

On a literal level, the city's feline connection is clear. Kuching means "Cat City" in Malay.